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THE
MONTHLY
RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE
AND
Independent Journal.

Vol. XX.

OCTOBER, 1858.

No. 4.

PROF. F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D., EDITOR.

BOSTON:
LEONARD C. BOWLES, PROPRIETOR,
119 WASHINGTON STREET,
OVER THE BOOKSTORE OF
CROSBY, NICHOLS, & CO.
1858.

Postage, 1½ cents each number, or 18 cents a year, in advance.

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TERMS.

Single copies \$3.50 a year, or \$3.00, if paid in advance.
 " " 1.75 half-year, in advance.
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 Twelve " " " 25.00, " "

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THE
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THE CHRISTIAN CHOICE.

"I WANT to be a Christian, but I don't know how to begin," said a friend not long since, with every apparent mark of sincerity and earnestness. The remark betrayed a state of mind not altogether strange or individual, but which, we believe, would be the honest utterance of many seemingly indifferent to religious truths, even among those of education and discernment, who might readily be supposed to be acquainted with the fundamental realities of faith.

How many such confessions of yearning and want, and of ignorance of the simplest truths of a really practical faith, might be heard in many of our congregations, were there the open revelation of the heart's deep secrets, as from Sabbath to Sabbath we meet for worship and communion! How many restless longings and unsatisfied desires, how many surgings of remorse and throbbings of conscience, how many glimpses of a purer, better inward life, and longings for a truer peace and reconciliation! O, were the deep yearnings and struggles and aspirations of one single immortal soul, awakened to a consciousness of its own individual being, clearly opened to view, what fiction of poet or

novelist, what delineation of painter or artist, could compare with *that* revelation in intensity of interest? The conflicts of nations would seem like mere child's play, in comparison with the battles of conscience and will and inclination, and all the glories and honors of the outward world, that so attract and win, would quickly fade into utter nothingness as the clear light of the Divine Holiness shone into the deepest recesses of the spirit, revealing all its secret windings and needs!

"*I want* to be a Christian." There is, then, a consciousness of need in your soul, — that you are not all that you ought to be, — that there is something higher and holier to which you can aspire and reach. There is a hunger of the spirit that craves satisfaction, a restlessness that asks for peace, a dim but never-ceasing yearning for something not yet attained. "*I want*"; — have you realized the deep significance of these words? Have you, in the secret chamber of your soul, uttered them unto God alone? Are you sure that it is no worldly longing, no mere discouragement as to the attainment of outward possession, no momentary excitement of feeling alone, no desire of ambition, that prompts the utterance? Or is it, in truth, the cry of the soul's immortal nature, seeking after God, if haply it may find him?

But your own words give the answer, "*I want to be a Christian*"; — yet you "*know not how to begin*." You feel as if some mysterious influence must come over you, as if some mighty change must be wrought upon you, ere you take the first steps in the Christian life. You are waiting for something, — you hardly know for what. You expect some sudden light to shine into your soul, that will at once make all clear and bright within; and until this comes, you feel as if you had nothing to do, — as if there were no accountability on your part for any amount of indifference or self-indulgence.

But we would ask, Does not this very self-indulgence render you more and more uneasy? You *know* you are not

right, and is not every day of indifference rendering you colder and more selfish? Are you gaining aught in the course you are now pursuing? Are you taking any resolute steps to satisfy the want you feel and acknowledge? "Work out your *own* salvation with fear and trembling," saith the Apostle, adding the blessed promise, "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." The very consciousness of your need shows that His Spirit has been and is pleading with you, and now it is yours to *work*, — no easy, holiday task, — but to labor, to strive, to agonize, with the whole energy and resolution of your soul, for the satisfying of your soul's wants.

Begin, then, *just where you are*. Wait for nothing, but begin this very hour to act as Jesus bids you, and begin to pray, and thus you will begin to be a Christian. Read the Saviour's own words, and trait by trait compare your character with his life and teachings.

Before going forth to the active duties of the day, let the morning hour be consecrated by sincere prayer and the study of God's word, and the influence of that hour will sanctify the busy scenes of daily life. Are you tempted to impatience and anger? Remember Him who endured all reproach meekly and patiently, who when reviled reviled not again, and check the hasty utterance.

Do sloth and indolence lay their iron grasp upon your energies? "Be diligent in business," *because* "fervent in spirit." Think of the great work of life to be accomplished, — how little has been done, and of the heights of attainment yet possible for you to reach; and so meditate on these themes until the soul is fully aroused to put forth its energies, and to seek and strive with diligence and earnestness.

Are you tempted by the cunning whispers of pride and the vain insinuations of human praise and flattery? Ask yourself truthfully the one question, How do I stand in *God's* sight, — before Him who alone really knows me? — and the tempter will depart. Are you inclined to restless-

ness and discontent? Think of Him who, though rich, yet for our sakes became poor, and your peevishness will be stilled. Are you rash, quick, impulsive in word or deed? Look up to that calm eye fixed steadfastly upon you, and pause and consider your ways.

Does one whom you thought a friend betray your confidence, or utter the poisonous word of slander against you, — or have you to endure the bitter trial of injustice and wrong? In Christ you have the assured sympathy of one who has been tried by sorrow and desertion, and every form of human suffering; and with his hand to guide you, you need fear no ill, nor shrink from any loneliness on the pathway of life. Carry the consciousness of his presence and sympathy with you through the day, into all its minute concerns and petty occurrences, and so its every duty will become ennobled, and its every joy sanctified.

Begin just where you are, with just the light you now possess, and you will not fail to be quickened and enlightened. Here is no mystery. *Act* according to what you do know, even though your faith be but as the grain of mustard-seed, and it will surely grow; for action and prayer are to the soul what light and air are to the tiny seed, quickening and expanding the secret germ of life.

To rest in the consciousness of want, without using the means of satisfying that want, would be as weak and foolish as the starving man refusing to reach forth his hand for the food lying within his very grasp. But in each case the act must be the man's own, — the determination of his own will. He must choose whether he will put forth his hand and take the food, — he must choose whether he will follow Christ or not. Of his own free will must he resolutely decide whether to act as God commands, or to follow his own inclinations and selfish purposes.

To say, "I want to be a Christian," and there to rest, as if the whole work were to be wrought by some external process, is the sure and certain way to extirpate the very

capacity for religion from the soul, to bury this talent beneath the earthly clods of indifference and sloth. You cannot pray, you cannot begin to pray, without a deeper sense of your relationship to God and to Christ. You cannot act one day in reference to God's will and not your own, without feeling a quickened sense of obligation to Him; you cannot look to Christ as the manifestation of the Father, without a growing consciousness of your nearness to Him as his child, and a longing desire for assured pardon and reconciliation.

If the "want" is truly felt, and not the result of a mere transient excitement, — if it is indeed the want "to be a Christian," — then you will not fail in the solemn and resolute choice of Christ as your only Master, of him as the soul's only Saviour. In him you have the only being who can and will meet your deepest needs, — one who unites the Divine Holiness with the tenderest human sympathies, and in whom you can know and draw near to the Father. All things else, all other judgments, all other plans, are to be held subservient to God's will in him with regard to you, — worldly success, ambition, expediency, the love of human praise, pride, selfishness, all lower motives, are to be merged in this one supreme desire.

And here we find the cause of the halting steps, and the low aims, and the feeble endeavors of so many who have begun the Christian life, but who often despairingly and even bitterly exclaim: "I make no true progress; I often seem to lose in a single day the ground that I have gained through months of toil, and I am weary of striving; there is no use for me to expect to be a true Christian; that attainment is for those differently and more happily constituted."

Now the difficulty of such desponding ones lay at the very outset. Too much was expected, while yet there was no solemn, fixed purpose, no resolute, decided choice in the soul. Whether sooner or later the question forces itself upon the soul, "What is to be my aim and end in life? —

what master shall I serve?"—there must be the solemn, determined answer and decision, or the whole of life will be a mere restless beating against the tide of inclination, passion, and circumstance. You may not be able precisely to state the time when you first felt an interest in religious truths; perchance it may date back to your childhood's days, and you may have no distinct remembrance of a time when your heart was not open to religious influences. But as you have advanced to maturer years, you feel the need of a more distinct, definite, open purpose; and if indifference has cast its iron fetters about your soul in past years, then only the more do you need to say definitely to yourself before God: "Henceforth I consecrate myself to Christ and to his service. He is my Master, I am his servant, and am to seek his will, and his only. I am not to seek my own pleasure and amusement, or the gratification of selfish ambition, but I am pledged to him as my soul's only guide. Let him work within me freely and fully, both strengthening me to will, and aiding me to perform his good pleasure."

No human friend—nay, reverently would we add, not even Omnipotence itself—can *constrain* the human will to choose the right. Here, in this one fearful, noble prerogative, you are your own master. On you, and you alone, and on you only, as an immortal, accountable being, does it depend whether to choose the path of life, or the way of death. Every motive is given you, every inducement is held out to you, every promise pledged to you, that Infinite Love can offer, to lead you in the right and heavenly way; but in this one power through which you may be akin to God in his infinite realm of being, you must take the solemn prerogative into your own hands, either to blast and ruin, or, by uniting it with, or rather merging it in, the Divine Will, to become your only freedom and strength.

Is such your choice when you say, "I want to be a Christian"? Do you really desire to have God and Christ *abide* in you? O, begin thoroughly and earnestly the work!

No half-way consecration will ever satisfy you, no superficial purposes! For a time they may seem sufficient, and some progress will be made; but the hour of self-revelation *will* come, the consciousness of being weighed in the balance and found wanting, the goading sense of superficiality in the inner life, and of the want of a firm anchor and an abiding hope, when the waves of adversity beat against the soul; or when the inward cloud casts over the spirit the heavy shades of darkness, through which faith in vain seeks to pierce, unless it has learned to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Deep in the recesses of your soul must you penetrate, and far through them all, — through the flattering delusions of pride and vanity, through the deceitful windings of ambition, through the deadening power of self-sufficiency, must peal the solemn consecration, "I am Thine: abide Thou in me, and I in Thee."

Yes, it is no metaphor, no figurative words, which we use. It is a glorious possibility to every seeking soul. It is a simple *fact* of the inward life. The soul is literally "born again," created anew in Christ Jesus, and the life is hid with him in God. The bitterness of the earlier conflict is passed, for the love of God has changed the seeming evil to a nobler good. The restless tide of passion is stilled, for the spirit of God moves over the troubled waters, and all is peace. There is no sad loneliness on the pathway of life, for the Father is ever near, and in the Saviour's indwelling presence there can only be a chastened joy.

Who can tell the holy peace of thus abiding in Christ, and he in us! Who would not long and strive and pray for this promised and holy companionship! Not afar off are we to seek, but here, in our own souls, will the Comforter dwell, if we will but seek his presence! And then there will be no conflict as to the path of duty, for the Christ within will direct and guide us. The will, though free, will be placed within his holy keeping, to turn, to guide, and to direct it, and the spirit's only question will be,

"What wilt *Thou* have me to do?" Over the oft discordant notes of the soul the spirit of God will breathe in strains of purest harmony, and the daily life will be but the reflection of the spirit of the Christ within. Say not that these aspirations are too high, this standard too lofty, for you to recognize at the very outset of your Christian course. Nay, it is all implied in the very act of the choice incumbent upon you; for if you turn to God with the thorough, solemn purpose of self-consecration to him through Christ, will you not trust his promise and his power, to work with and in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure?

"One man, glowing with holy zeal, is able to change a whole city," exclaimed the eloquent and earnest preacher of Antioch, as the anxious thousands thronged around him, and hung breathless upon his words, as if the fate of their noble city rested solely upon his intercession and influence with the Emperor.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me," wrote a yet nobler apostle of the faith, as from his prison home in the Imperial City he calmly and joyfully looked forward to the martyr's death and the martyr's crown.

And this is to be your spirit, — the spirit of earnestness and of faith, of Christian confidence and trust. With the solemn choice of Christ as your guide and Saviour, after years of comparative indifference, or marked at least by no distinct, resolute purpose, you have felt the soul's want, and now desire to begin the Christian life. Fear not because of the heights yet before you, narrow and steep as the path may often seem, for the Good Shepherd has trodden it before you, and will gently lead you on.

Take up the cross he may lay upon you, and bear it cheerfully and faithfully, and in the power of the Crucified shall you be made strong. Think not vainly and weakly of resting at ease, but let the Master's spirit breathe in and through you, and then shall a new vigor and a new power animate your whole being, and the pathway of life, that now

seems so toilsome and dim to your circumscribed and feeble vision; will daily grow wider and clearer to your quickened sight, stretching on and up, through all the mists and shades and storms of earth, until it leads you to your home and to your God.

Earnestness and courage, penitence and faith, — seek these, and go forth resolutely, calmly, fearlessly, in the way you have chosen. Omnipotence itself is with you, and you cannot and will not fail, if you do but cling in heart to your soul's only Saviour.

What is now the solemn, resolute answer of your whole spirit, to his earnest, entreating words, "Come unto me"?

H. M.

SOCIETY AND WOMAN.

It is now almost eight years since the first Woman's Rights Convention in New England was held at Worcester, October 23 and 24, 1850. It seems to us fitting at this time to look at the subjects which were brought up then and there, and to examine briefly as to what, if any, progress has been made in their organization into institutions or life. We are the more ready to look upon this subject at this time, because there seems to be a slight reaction in regard to the movement. Some of its most zealous defenders have been led to other views, while the pressing exigencies of the Kansas question last year and of the financial difficulties this have absorbed the attention of those whose sympathy is usually given to all reforms. It is therefore a calm and quiet moment, when we may count up the gains and see where the balance lies.

Perhaps, rather, we should apologize for presenting a subject so hackneyed and so vulgar at all. Nothing is so

ridiculous, nothing so unpopular. The word calls up to most minds only the most absurd associations. A strong-minded woman, in men's clothes, smoking cigars, and swearing, with her house in disorder, her children unwashed and unkempt, and crying for the bread she scorns to make, — while she is engaged in preparing her speech for Congress or the Convention, — represents the idea to their minds. They have not learned to think of it as furnishing rest for the poor seamstress's fingers, hope to the degraded prostitute's worn-out heart, life and occupation to the weary and spiritless old maid. They have not thought of it as making women better mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, because nobler and truer women.

Some wise men ignore the question; convinced of the entire subordination of woman, they do not recognize her existence as a part of the body politic or social. They are connected with individuals in relations of ornament or convenience to themselves, but have no idea that the condition or culture of the mass of women has anything to do with the destiny of the race. It has been said of a distinguished lecturer on history, whose clear and masculine understanding penetrates deeply into political causes, that from his lectures one could never infer the existence of woman at all. And yet it seems as if that must be a shallow view of history where the influence and destiny of one half of the human race has no place. Is it not like those old chronicles which record with loving detail the adventures of princes, nobles, and knights, but have no perception of the life of the working classes, out of which yet come the seeds of revolution and political changes? And we need not look far into history to find the influence of woman, if not for good, at least for evil. If we ignore the existence of Zenobia and Hypatia, we must recognize the mischief done by Aspasia. If Joan of Arc was a fanatic girl, whose story is half a myth or fable, at least Pompadour and Du Barry are fearful realities, whose influence has not ceased in its poisonous

effect upon France to this day. And in proportion as woman is denied free and varied exercise of her faculties, and restricted to one solitary method of gaining power, will she abuse that. There is much analogy in the case of ecclesiastical tyranny. Monks and priests, cut off from a natural and fair share of the pursuits and pleasures of society, have always been among its most dangerous foes.

To others it seems a strange perversion of taste to seek any change for woman. According to them, the life of woman is a beautiful poem, to mar whose symmetry and perfection by contact with the rough world were as unwise as to set the Venus de Medicis to hewing stones, or to turn the Psyche into a common sailor. According to them, you would suppose this to be the average life of woman. Reared by devoted and affectionate parents, she is the pet and idol of a home, where dolls and sugar-candy are provided to an unlimited extent. In girlhood, at school, where no whipping is allowed, she is pleasantly floated over the surface of the sea of learning, sails a little way up the creeks of all the accomplishments, and is well fitted to *talk* upon all literary branches. She takes her part in society at an early age. Here she finds adoring manhood at her feet, proud to obey her slightest wish, anxious to shield her from every danger. She neither feels the cold winds of life nor stumbles in its rugged ways. Soon a wife, she is the centre of a beautiful home; her husband toils and plans and provides all material goods; she has only to be always nicely dressed, to receive him with a sweet smile when he returns home. Her little rosy children gather by degrees about her, and look up to her with reverence and love. Intuitive knowledge makes her an admirable nurse, — though she is ignorant of physiology, — and custom demands of her to be a good housekeeper, though she has never used her hands in work. As she grows old, her children rise up and call her blessed; she is the ideal of womanhood to her grown-up sons, who are stanch in defence of the superiority of mother's pies and

puddings. She celebrates her golden marriage among a circle of loving grandchildren, and goes to her grave honored by a sermon from her pastor, who calls her a mother in Israel. Is not this a true picture of the life of woman, as it is represented in novels and stories, in sermons and treatises on woman's mission, and in satires on woman's rights? Now were this so, although even this would seem to us a very dangerous kind of hot-house life, not altogether good for the soul, still we should hesitate to disturb it, as we would scruple to rob a friend of his money, although we believed poverty better fitted to develop his energies. But whom in real life does this picture correspond to? Is it the wife, the daughter, of the drunkard? Is it the hundreds of shop-girls, seamstresses, servant-girls, washerwomen, primary-school teachers, boarding-house keepers, who are found everywhere? Is it the young girls whose dying or failing fathers leave them suddenly penniless on the world, with habits of luxury and expense which they have no longer the means to gratify,—who cannot work and are ashamed to beg? "God knows what they do." Is it the bereaved widow, who has been taught to lean upon her husband as upon her God, and now finds herself, with her heart full of anguish, left to struggle with life for herself and her little ones? Is it the solitary old maid, who has outlived her youth and her beauty, and has nothing to take their place? And still more, is it the abused or deserted wife, or the betrayed and ruined girl, who will recognize this picture as anything but a dream of unripe fancy? It is for these classes that we would consider the possibility of an improvement in woman's position and means of development,—for these that we would seek a larger sphere and better organized lives.

But it is not worth while to exaggerate. We shall not compare the condition of women in our New England States to that of the serfs of Russia or the slaves of Carolina. Theoretically the differences may not be very great, but practically things are not so bad as that. We do not think

there is any call for a violent revolution in their favor. Revolutions are only justifiable when classes groan under an intolerable tyranny. Such is not the case now; it is not a question of tyrant and victim, but of false ideas and relations misunderstood. And even under the worst of human laws there is a law of God binding man and woman together, which overrides them all, and gives to her through affection some portion of what is denied by law. The case is one requiring thought, investigation, careful consideration, quite as much as immediate and decisive action. What we ask in the beginning is that false barriers may be taken away, and the waters suffered to find their true level. We are sure that neither man nor woman can long be forced out of their nature, or revolve in orbits other than what their Creator has designed for them.

If this be true, much of the excited and violent declamation on both sides falls to the ground as worthless. Too much has been claimed for woman by her defenders. Partly from her constitution, and partly from those very circumstances which have dwarfed her in other directions, woman seems to have a larger preponderance of the religious and moral sentiments than man. But it seems to us this is a very slight, and possibly a merely circumstantial difference. That there are nice shades of variety in action between male and female, in this as in all other departments, we do not doubt, but we fail to see that there is any sex in goodness. Virtue does not seem to us a thing of temperament and physical constitution, but of fidelity of heart and soul. For a Louis XV. on the throne of France, we have an Empress Catharine in Russia. The advantage may be a little on the side of the woman's intellect, but very little in favor of her morals. The same temptation of absolute power is equally fatal to both. Some tell us that the presence of woman in our legislative halls would maintain a beautiful decorum and peace there; but late scenes in a small society of women in our own city, if correctly reported, almost rival the be-

havior of honorable Senators in Congress. We see no ground to hope any results so speedy, but we do hope, from a larger and freer career for woman, that she will rise out of much of the littleness and petty faults which now deform her character, that the cultivation of her intellect will supersede the tendency to foolish and malicious gossip, and that, if she does not conquer ambition, it will at least displace vanity. We make too much account of differences. There is one common human nature in all ages, climates, sexes; this is the largest part of our life. The variations are like the mountains of our globe, very large when seen from the level of the ground, but very small in comparison to its whole bulk. So man and woman in their relation to God and nature are the same; in their relation to each other there is a beautiful diversity, which, left to its free development, would become an element of harmony, and not of strife. The more we realize in our hearts the unity of the race, the more likely shall we be to become tolerant and generous in our relation to individuals.

With thus much of preface and justification for our subject, let us look briefly at those topics which received the attention of the earliest Woman's Convention, and see if we can recognize any progress in regard to them.

All defence of the present position of woman rests primarily and mainly on her physical constitution. From her bodily weakness and diminutive size it is argued that she cannot be the equal of man either in labor or intellectual effort, while from the peculiarity of her structure she is fitted to one special function mainly or entirely. Without seeking to dispute this view of the subject, two or three important questions are yet to be asked. First, if woman's physical constitution be not equal to man's, still is it equal to herself? Do our present views and modes of life give her a development of body at all commensurate with the capacity and the demands of her nature? An affirmative answer to this question would be given by no sane mind. The feeble and

sickly condition of our women is matter of constant and daily remark. A healthy woman is the rarest phenomenon, and the ordinary female constitution breaks down entirely under its peculiar functions of maternity and the rearing of children. It is hardly worth while to ask that married women should do more than this, when so few are entirely adequate to this inevitable and natural draft upon their strength. "What does this mean?" asked a physician; "why are women so sickly?" "Why should they not be?" we replied; "it is the ideal of womanhood in America to be delicate." Robust, vigorous health, which can only be obtained by exercise of the muscles and bracing of the nerves in the open air, is considered decidedly unfeminine. To be "slim" is as necessary to female beauty in New England, as to have small feet in China. Such a fully developed bust, such hands and feet, such rich and ruddy color as belong to the fully developed woman, as we see her represented in Greek sculpture or Venetian painting, would have no chance of admiration or attention from American admirers. It would not be interesting. The pale, delicate contour of face, the languid step, the spiritual expression, which belong to the neuralgic or consumptive patient, is the ideal of loveliness. It is true, we would be glad to have all this without the suffering, the doctor's bill, and the early death; but after all, it is this which we admire and ask for, and we get it. When we learn the beauty of a healthy and fully developed woman, we shall be on the way to obtain it. And something has been done in this direction. Physiology is taught in schools, summers are spent among the mountains, or in quiet retreats on the sea-shore, instead of at Saratoga or Newport. The hoops are so very large that the waists need not be infinitesimally small. Some of the girl's schools have regular gymnastic exercises. But what we need is, not exercises which will develop the body, but a life which will use it and so keep it healthy; and we have done very little towards procuring this either for man or woman.

Again, is not woman's physical nature equal to accomplishing all that we demand from her? May she not have physique enough to engage in more varied labor and in more active life? The answer is one, not of theory, but of fact. In other countries women are employed in every department of farm work, — in every kind of industry; not upon fair and equal terms, but in a manner quite as exhausting to the physical nature. They sustain it without injury to the special functions of womanhood. But the labor there is too great for the production of beauty in woman, as it is for man. Neither were made for constant, severe toil of the hands alone; both become hard, ugly, stupid, under its influence. It may be a question whether woman has sufficient physical strength for political life, when we recall the possibilities of life in Congress; but when we remember that we have had a very successful Governor who could not ride horseback, we think that she might be able to hold at least some of the subordinate offices.

If there is any truth in the teachings of physiology, of what immense importance is this subject. What can we expect of a race sprung from sickly and feeble mothers? This most sublime and holy function, which should be healthy and natural, is looked upon with dread and horror by many, so much are its sufferings aggravated by the folly and ignorance in regard to woman. Still we have accomplished something in the most important step towards reform. Ideas are changing. Health has been accepted as a blessing and a charm by a portion of the community. Children are kept more in the open air, and there is hope that the next generation may witness still further improvements.

But closely connected with this subject is that of dress, — a vexed topic, which it is difficult to handle. The earliest efforts of the friends of woman's rights were directed to a reform in woman's costume. It is faulty in every respect. It is unpicturesque and ungraceful; it is unsuited to the exigencies of the seasons; and it so impedes freedom of the

limbs that any thorough physical development is impossible. Bonnets which neither shade the face in summer nor protect it from the wind in winter, sleeves which expose the arm to draughts of cold, skirts so wide as to impede the motion in walking, or else stretched upon a hoop so as to destroy all harmony of life and flow of drapery, and so long as to sweep the sidewalks at every step, have neither the recommendation of beauty or convenience. The "Bloomer" costume was proposed and adopted by many women. In many respects it obviated the objections to the fashionable costume, but in general it was neither dignified nor becoming; it was so entirely distinct from every recognized dress, that it exposed its wearers to remark and insult, and it has been very generally abandoned. We cannot see that seven or eight years have brought us any improvement in this respect. The abundance and cheapness of imported fabrics have led to greater display in dress, and the fashions were never more showy or more absurd. We do not look upon this as a matter of slight importance, even on its æsthetic side. Dress is or should be one of the fine arts. If the painter is careful of his draperies, why should not all engaged in the art of life pay due heed to theirs? The nice adaptation of the form of the dress to the wearer's figure, of its color to her complexion, of its style to her character, position, and means, is a matter demanding and deserving thought, study, and care. Here, again, we want a reforming idea,—a perception of meaning in everything, a sense of true beauty and grace,—not a slavish devotion to fashion. And we may as well here make a remark which fits also our whole theme,—that the true method of introducing reforms is not by doing anything in a spirit of bravado, or as an assertion of independence, but in a simple and unaffected effort to meet the demands of life. If "Bloomers" were less willing to parade in Washington Street, and only wore a working-dress when at work, and because they worked, we think they would have discovered some happier invention in

dress, and have met a more gracious reception from the community.

But the extravagant display in dress has a very sad aspect to our eyes. It were foolish to place it as the main cause of our pecuniary difficulties, but it certainly is one of the many forms of extravagance which have helped to produce this embarrassment. It is one of the main causes of that greater evil which is not occasional, but perpetual. It is that which too often leads woman to her ruin. "What brought you to this?" was asked of a wretched prostitute in Philadelphia. "Love of fine clothes," was the answer, which seemed to turn all the brilliant display of the gay streets into a fearful, ghastly spectacle. In our society, where there is no recognized distinction of classes, the shop-girl and the servant-girl must ape the fine lady. They wear silks and velvets instead of calicoes and merinoes, and so spend their money as fast as they earn it. When they are thrown out of employment, — in a time of sickness or of money pressure, — they have the expensive taste formed, with nothing left to gratify it. The tempter finds them an easy prey. The world over, the depraved class of women are known by their gay dresses; and we are mortified to add, it is a common remark in Paris, that no one walks on the Champs Elysées in showy attire but "*les femmes entre tenues*" and American ladies. But this fondness for finery is not confined to grown-up women; it is sedulously implanted in children from the very cradle. One need only walk up Beacon Street any fine sunny day for an illustration of this remark. Little cherubs are buried under such a mass of embroidery, ribbon, and lace, that all trace of their original proportions is lost; it is one part baby to at least three of haberdashery. Children who should be running races and driving hoop, — in stout shoes, good thick coats, and plain hats, — have to bear about a weight of silk, velvet, furs, and feathers that would befit a Russian princess. We almost lose sight of the physical and moral evil of this custom in

the violence it does to our æsthetic sense. We cannot afford to lose the grace and beauty, the freshness and simplicity of childhood, which sometimes seem the only things to remind us of a possible Eden and an angelic existence. The artist must go to the Irish quarters if he would get models for his pictures of children; in higher regions he finds only diminutive dandies and fine ladies. Can we not improve the necessities of the present crisis, which force all to retrenchment and economy, by introducing a chaste and beautiful style of dress, which shall not drain the means of the humble, nor oppress the consciences of the rich?

If we now turn to the subject of Education, the prospect is more cheering. The literary culture of women is steadily on the advance. High schools in our towns and our cities are opened at last for girls as well as for boys. Colleges are not unknown which admit them to the opportunities of more advanced study. Teachers of girls' schools in our cities make large profits, so that superior talent is devoted to this work. The most important advance is the idea now becoming general, — that the two sexes should be united in the same school; that, as they mingle in the family and in their sports, so their studies should be the same. The plan works well. A mutual emulation is excited, which extends to behavior as well as to study. An experienced teacher remarked to us, that she could see no decided difference between the capacity of boys and girls. Sometimes she had classes in which one had the superiority, sometimes the other. But the great difficulty in woman's education is still to be overcome, and that not in the school, but in life. She is not yet educated to a purpose. She finds no difficulty in mastering the problems of algebra and geometry, but to what use will she ever put them? It is not enough to tell her of their value as mental discipline. She sees plainly that the true discipline of mind is to be gained only in life and earnest labor. Physiologists tell us that it is impossible to put forth as much strength in an action of the

arm by the force of will alone, as can be readily exerted in the contest with a real obstacle. And so it is with the mind. So soon as the student feels that his studies have no practical aim, his powers fail, and he becomes listless and inattentive. In this regard, we must consider the establishment of the schools of design for women as of the very greatest educational importance. They are all defective enough in artistic merit. It is a necessary result of our youth and inexperience in matters of art, but they do all recognize a definite purpose in their instruction. The pupils feel that their work is to be brought to the test of availability for practical use, and they labor in a spirit of earnestness which produces admirable results. We cannot therefore estimate their value solely by the number of women who have been successful in obtaining livelihood by their pencils; their true success is in the new ideas they have disseminated. "The spirit in which we work is the highest matter."

Now, whatever our doubts about woman's sphere, it is very clear that she must have something to do in this world. Is she to be housekeeper, are not chemistry, mechanics, book-keeping, all exercised in housekeeping? Why are not girls taught the application of organic chemistry and physiology to the selection and preparation of food, — to the proper location and ventilation of dwellings? How many a mother has to decide, on the instant, what to do for a sick child, when doctor and nurse are far away! She depends on a miscellaneous set of notions picked up from mothers and grandmothers. If science be good for anything, should she not use it in the most important business of life? But how few women can form any connection between their school studies and their after duties!

Thus the subject of employment is closely connected with that of education, and this is the great field of the Woman's Rights movement. It is a subject which we must touch upon with diffidence and apprehension, for it borders on that vast domain of social and political economy of which no

man is a thorough master. All that is said of the low wages of woman, of the sufferings of poor seamstresses, of the avarice of employers, may be very true in fact and very touching in poetry; but it does not reach the real difficulty at all. It is impossible for any employers, however benevolent, to find sale for poor work, or for more work and at higher prices than the market will allow. It seems to us that the great difficulty is, that women do not know how to do many things well, and therefore, of those few which they can do, the supply is greatly beyond the demand. Even an accomplished seamstress, who understands her business, can make a very respectable living, and a skilful dressmaker or milliner may amass a fortune. But there are crowds of poor seamstresses, milliners, and dressmakers, who do their work ill and fare very ill also. The last seven years have given us the sewing-machine, and it is in our view the greatest good which this period has accomplished for woman. Driven from an employment the most cramping to the energies of mind and body, women will be forced into other pursuits requiring greater exertion of intellect, and therefore affording a better remuneration. This has always been the result of the introduction of labor-saving machinery, to raise the workingman from a condition of mere handicraft to that of an intelligent superintendent of labor. Something also has been accomplished by the schools of design in a right direction, though less than the sanguine hopes of their friends and pupils anticipated. A few women are employed in designing wood-engraving and lithography. These will lead the way to more. Still more significant and delightful is the brilliant success of noble women in the higher walks of art. The name of Rosa Bonheur is a tower of strength to the young aspirant in art, and our own city furnishes examples no less encouraging. The beautiful creation of genius lately exhibited by Miss Hosmer needed neither toleration nor gentle consideration for her sex and age. It is not faultless, certainly, but it is full of life, expression, and

originality, and may challenge a comparison with the works of any living sculptor. Other less public names might be given of women who have attained a high degree of excellence in painting, and who devote themselves to it with single-hearted earnestness as a life pursuit.

The field of literature we consider as won. In the departments of criticism, poetry, biography, and fiction, a class which may number such names as Elizabeth B. Browning, Mrs. Gaskell, George Sand, Frederika Bremer, Charlotte Bronte, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Margaret Fuller, may safely be left to speak for itself. It needs neither apologists nor defenders. Female literature now receives the best of all compliments, — thorough and severe criticism. We see nothing to prevent any woman whose genius lies in the direction of belles-lettres from developing it freely and fully.

In another direction, perhaps even more beneficial attempts are making to introduce woman to new spheres of labor. The idea has occurred to some benevolent minds, to bring woman back to Eve's original employment, the garden. This offers a healthy occupation, giving that physical exercise in the open air which she finds in no other mode of life. It is proposed to open a kind of Horticultural College, where the theory and practice of gardening may both be taught, and where the labor of the pupils may contribute towards their support. The plan is yet in its infancy, although a lot of land has been given by a lady of New York for this purpose. We wish it all success, and that many a lovely Eve may go forth into it, —

“ Among her fruits and flowers
To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
Her nursery ; they at her coming sprung
And touched by her fair tendance gladlier grew.”

An occupation for woman sanctioned by so devoted an advocate of her inferiority as John Milton must find favor with even the most conservative.

The early efforts of reformers were directed to introducing

women into the learned professions. These have met with only partial success. The Church is itself in such a transitional state that we do not esteem it a very important or practical measure to urge the introduction of women into the clergy. That women must bear a very important part in the coming Church seems to us inevitable, and we would prefer to wait for the new bottles, rather than to enter into a contest for the half-worn skins of the old vintage.

Legal knowledge is a very important advantage to woman, and it seems highly desirable that, in those cases where she comes into contest with man, as in suits for divorce and alimony, the guardianship of children, &c., she should have the advice of one of her own sex learned in the law. How dependent is she, when left guardian of orphan children, upon the advice of those very persons who may be interested against her! We have heard of women who proposed devoting themselves to the legal profession, but are not aware that any have yet entered on its exercise.

In medicine there has been more success. In spite of the uncertain state of this science, where sects contend with almost as much fury as in theology, this is yet a most important field for woman; and she has a natural adaptation for it. In all times the female leech has been consulted, and she has worked intuitively, and often ignorantly. The people have decided that they will have female physicians; the question is now, Shall they be thoroughly and scientifically educated, or shall they rely upon natural insight and a miscellaneous half-knowledge alone? The establishment of the Hospital for Women and Children, in New York, last year, under the care of Drs. Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, is a most important step, giving an opportunity for professional study and practice such as has never before been afforded to woman. But we must say one word in regard to the professional life of woman. It is only by entering into it with the single purpose of accomplishing its work, and securing its aims, that any good is accomplished. It is of very

little consequence whether the title of Esquire, Dr., or Rev. be accorded to woman or not, — whether she rides about in a gig to visit her patients, or sees them in her own house; the important thing is to understand her business, and perform it thoroughly, and recognition will come in due time.

Something also has been accomplished in regard to woman's equality in the marriage relation. In our own State, laws have been recently passed securing to her the use of her own property and her own earnings, and we have heard of no evil resulting from the measure. We shall not enter into the questions of marriage and divorce, which would need a volume instead of a short paragraph to do them justice.

Many advocates of woman's rights place the question of her equal political recognition in the front rank, as the most important. To us it does not seem so. Political life does not occupy the large proportion of human existence which sometimes appears. We do not question the entire right of every mature and sane member of the community to a share in the government, nor do we doubt the propriety and capability of woman for taking a part in political affairs. But considering the present state of our own country, we esteem the questions of education and employment more important, and easier of practical solution, than this. Still efforts have been made to introduce the feminine element into the body politic with some prospect of final success. Petitions have been presented to various legislatures asking for a consideration of this subject, — and the arguments of the petitioners have been listened to with respect. In some of the Western States, the motion has been rejected by a very small majority. We think it would be well to approach the subject in another way, to demand for women those offices which confer neither great profit nor much honor, and which she might therefore receive without exciting the wrath of parties. There would seem to be a natural propriety in making women the managers of primary and grammar

schools, overseers of the poor, judges of probate to look after the interests of widows and orphans, inspectors of female prisons and almshouses, and the like. Let them commence, like young physicians, by working for the poor gratis, and their good success may induce the rich to place themselves in their hands. Why should not women, who have clear ideas of business, attend railroad, bank, and manufacturing-company meetings, and vote intelligently in regard to their own interests? We may well defy them to make such matters worse than they are at present, and possibly, where the masculine understanding has so miserably failed, feminine intuition may find out the way.

In thus looking back over the last few years, we see very little of brilliant success or of magnificent accomplishment, but we do see much awakening to life and thought, many efforts after the practical realization of important ideas. Many attempts seem to have failed; but they have failed as the plant fails when it deposits its seed in the earth and then dies. Many have been made unwisely, and ought to fail; but still something has been at least learned from mistake.

Soon after the period of the Convention, a paper was started to be especially devoted to the advocacy of woman's rights. It has ceased to exist. It was conducted in a very temperate spirit, and was free from all those faults against taste which are apt to prevail in reform papers, but it lacked variety and interest.

"What boots it thy virtue,
What profit thy parts,
While one thing thou lackest,
The art of all arts."

Our recent financial distress offers some new chances for women. The numbers suddenly impoverished and obliged to resort to work for a living must warn some, at least, of the importance of educating daughters as well as sons to a calling which will win them bread. That simplicity in dress which economy made necessary, good taste may find to be

desirable, and the pressure of misfortune may be found to be a gentle leading into truer and happier paths in life. The next seven years ought to show still greater results than the last. Many a bud should blossom and bear fruit. Let us not be discouraged if many fall withered. Out of a thousand acorns one only may produce an oak, yet oaks are grown to supply all the needs of the world.

E. D. C.

HINDRANCES TO A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY.

A SERMON BY E. H. SEARS.*

2 COR. IV. 5 :— "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

If there be a special revelation of truth from God for the salvation of mankind, there must be minds prepared for its reception and transmission. And if there be minds prepared to receive and transmit it, they must act in such concert and harmony as to form a body and organism; and if they be a body and organism, they must have the various functions and offices of an organization. Therefore a *revelation*, a *church*, and a *ministry* whose work shall be special and distinctive, are things each of which necessitates the others. And it has always been found, and it always must be, that each one determines the other two, and they rise and fall together. If there be no distinctive divine revelation, then there need be no church as its steward, for the common light of nature falls into the minds of all. And if no church, then no ministry, for the common sentiment and the common literature are the universal utterance of what comes to all men alike, and they are its only authorized priesthood.

* Preached at Clinton, at the ordination of Jared M. Heard, and published by request.

The occasion which brings us together presupposes our faith in a ministry whose office is special and sacred; which is in the world and yet apart from it, as a heavenly persuasive to holiness. What more sacred, what more beautiful, than to bear the message of heaven to earth, for the lack of which the multitudes perish and die? And yet I need not say to you, that the Christian ministry has lost nearly all its adventitious honors and rewards; and some men are debating whether it had better not be abolished altogether. I do not regret this. I rather rejoice that this is so, for it will bring back the ministry to its ancient simplicity, when it asked nothing of the world and borrowed nothing of human glory, but spake only as the Holy Ghost laid upon it the great necessity of utterance.

As yet, however, we have not quite come to that. Society is in one of those periods of transition where the new is struggling with the old. And there are portents at which many are troubled and turning pale. The statistics tell us that, while the population increases, and crime and worldliness too, the numbers of the ministry are rapidly waning; and the churches, which once included nearly all the people, are only isolated communions among the heedless and busy multitudes. Without stopping to ask the meaning of this, or what it may portend to society, I deem it a question of exceeding interest and moment, — **WHAT, IN THE PRESENT STATE OF THINGS, ARE THE CHIEF HINDRANCES TO A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY?** And I do not think there could be a question more becoming the place and the hour.

Let it not be said that the chief hindrance is a want of earnestness, — that earnestness will do anything and succeed anywhere. There is a great deal of this cant. And there is a great deal of earnestness which is nothing but the lurid blaze of self-love. The ministry of Christ in these times offers no lure to formalism, or the love of ease or self-seeking of any kind, and many of us break down under more earnestness than we can well carry; for unless it be wielded aright

and discharged clean to the mark, so far from being a means of success, it may be the occasion of signal defeat and disaster.

Let me restrict myself to the range of thought which is offered in the text. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." The occasion was this. A church had been founded at Corinth through the simple delivery of the great message, Jesus Christ the resurrection. It was good news,—a future life and a Saviour! The believers came together for prayer and prophesying, and the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and the risen Christ was felt to be among them. Everything promised well. By and by, however, the native peculiarities of the Greek mind began to come out and be manifest. Several teachers appeared among them, and it began to be a dispute with them who preached the best, or most according to the Greek notion of æsthetic training. Some preferred Apollos, some Cephas, and some Paul, and the whole matter resolved itself into one of personal preference between this man and that, while God and eternal things were becoming secondary. Hence you see how Paul labors through whole chapters to sink the preacher in the theme; as in the text, "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." This suggests to my mind two dangers that always beset the Church,—the substitution of preaching for worship, and the substitution of human discussions and theories about Christ for the living Christ himself.

Foremost among the hindrances to success in our religious communions I cannot hesitate to place *the substitution of preaching for worship*. Professor Park makes the computation, that, if the sermons preached in our land during a single year were all printed, they would fill a hundred and twenty million octavo pages. That is to say, 2,400,000 pages are poured forth every Sabbath of a year! Enough, one would suppose, to submerge the highest peaks of thought so deep that they never could be seen again. In the better days of the Church, preaching was a secondary matter, and

worship and communion and the melting of heart into heart were all in all. In fact, preaching, in the modern sense of the word, was not known at all in the primitive Church. Its form rather was that of prophesying; — that is, when the affections were aglow, and the intellect was fused in the fires of the heart, it poured out all its treasures spontaneously, and every meeting was a feast of love, and every motion of the heart was praise. No beating of the brain to make it yield up two sermons for the Sunday; no hammering out of creed-articles on theological anvils; no coming together of the church to look at a minister's performances! The risen and glorified Christ was among them, and they felt his presence as a sphere of the Divine Love, and needed no theories about the atonement, for they had the atonement itself. Immortality had just opened upon them its giant wonders and glories, and they did not need any sermons to *prove* the future life. Some of their hymns and chants are still preserved. They are addressed to the Saviour with whom they held personal communion, and that communion kept all the rills of tenderness trickling down the heart. Worship and communion were everything, and preaching, I repeat it, in the modern sense of the word, was the invention of later times.

Nor, let me add, did it ever become primary in the service of the Church till the wranglings of Protestantism had made it so. In the Catholic, and indeed all the mediæval Churches that preserve the primitive idea, prayer is placed before preaching, and the consequence is, that the mind even from infancy up is held in more reverent attitude towards sacred things, and a more subduing stillness in the presence of God. The old cathedral was itself a form of worship, — “a hymn to God sung in obedient stone,” — not built for Sunday alone, but open every day of the week, where the worshipper may come in from the noise of the world and dissolve his heart in the presence of God. The groves were the temples of heathen sacrifice, and after the

heathen became converted, and worshipped the true God, he turned his grove into a cathedral; and so the Gothic arch aspired with its lofty windows, its clustered columns, its rows of turrets and its leaves of tracery, as if his native forest had been turned to stone by the splendid magic of an enchanter.

I remember once hearing the younger Ware relate an incident of his travels in illustration of this very point. "I was passing," said he, "one of those old cathedrals, which are open every day of the week for those who wish to turn aside from the world and kneel and pray. My curiosity led me in. Nobody was there but an old soldier, who had laid by his sword and his helmet, and was kneeling before the Saviour upon the cross, and his hard features were relaxed and quivering, and the big tears were rolling over them like drops of rain. So absorbed was he, that he did not even know of my presence." The associations of the place, though they hovered in that awful silence and seclusion, were the most impressive sermon on the greatness of God and pardon, as the deepest need of man. And so, in every church where the idea of worship is primary, the first feeling when you enter it would be that of want, and the first movement of the soul upward a cry of penitence.

The worship of God and the communion of saints was the grand idea of the Sabbath ritual, and it so continued until doubtings and disputings displaced the Church idea for that of sect, and in fact turned the Church itself into a Babel. Then preaching becomes everything, and worship becomes almost nothing. The notion about church-going is to hear a sermon, and our whole Sunday edification is made to hinge upon that. With that notion you came up hither as hearers and lookers-on. Then everything centres about the person of the preacher, and you are chiefly concerned to see with what skill he can exhibit his talents, or defend the dogmas of his sect, or entertain you with his elocution, or play off the rockets of his imagination. And see

the consequences that must follow. The growth and prosperity, yea, the very being, of a religious society are made to depend on the personal, intellectual qualities of a single man,—a weak, frail mortal like yourselves. What a responsibility! And what a fatal inversion of the true order of things! And see the disastrous influence both on minister and people. He must preach,—preach twice every Sabbath; and he must make all the attractiveness and edification of Divine service depend upon that. The first question, before going to church, is, “Who is to preach?” And the first question coming home is, “How did you like *him*?” Prayer, in its large and vital sense, is forgotten. Probably during that service, while *God* was invoked, the audience were sitting about in lazy attitudes; but when the sermon comes where the preacher is to exhibit *himself*, the attention is awake and the ear is open wide. And if he have the rare gift of playing skilfully upon the minds of an audience,—in short, the rare gift of eloquence, the attention will continue to the close. But if it be a plain treatment of commonplace themes,—and all the themes of the Gospel ought by this time to be commonplace,—the hearer will probably droop as under the perfume of poppies, rather than under the spirit of the Lord. If it be one of those churches, however, in which truth is placed before life, somebody will probably keep awake to see whether he twangs properly upon the right phrases, or trips anywhere in the theological arithmetic which he learned at the seminary. If it be one of those congregations among whom faith in anything has become of no consequence, and the Bible has become rather obsolete, they will amuse themselves, probably, with the ingenuity of the preacher, as he spins out of his own brain his gossamer fancies, and sets them afloat above their heads in pretty balloon-bubbles,—that wretched substitute for the Gospel which is sometimes called originality.

Again, where preaching is substituted for worship, there is the besetting temptation to come together mainly for the

purpose of exposing other people's sins, — what are termed the sins of the age. It is our duty to expose in a right spirit the sins of the age; but if a congregation undertakes to feed on that, as its Sabbath-day nourishment, its food will assuredly turn to poison. What state of mind is so utterly hopeless and unchristian, as that which is produced by the constant *habit* of going to church to hear the evils of others exposed who are outside the Church, while ours have never been probed and laid bare? Uncharitableness, bigotry, self-righteousness, arrogance, conceit, censoriousness, spring up under such preaching and hearing as this, and when they think themselves rich and in need of nothing, they are inwardly the most poor and blind and naked of all men.

To sink the idea of worship in that of preaching, is to turn the Church into a school of criticism, or, worse yet, into a school of theological pugilism, fostering both in preachers and hearers a conceited intellectualism quite inconsistent with a humble reception of Jesus Christ. Hence all our divisions and subdivisions have sprung. Let prayer and fellowship be held primary, let a people keep close to the living Saviour in those heart-relations which diffuse his life through all the members, and no schism can ever take place; but let the idea of worship and fellowship be merged in that of preaching, and you will have schism without end. Hence those churches in which worship and fellowship are the supreme idea multiply and grow strong, mainly through their liturgical influence and devotional life; whereas the other sects protest, and protest, first against Rome, and then against each other, until their wretched Protestantism has broken them into fragments or crumbled them into atoms.

But this is not all. When a society depends mainly on preaching for its life and growth, it never can have a healthful and permanent ministry. Preachers at the best are finite; the well may be deep, but keep pumping and you will drain it before long. In plain language, and without figure, to furnish two sermons a Sabbath from year to year, which

shall of themselves keep fresh and living a people's interest in their place of worship, transcends the power of any but those of eccentric genius and endowments. Hence the ministry loses its permanence and its health of tone. The history of some parishes consists mainly of successive trials of all the preachers in rotation which are available, each one being emptied in turn of his freshness and originality, and left stranded by the way, that some new candidate may come forward and satisfy the awakened hunger after novelty and change. How different would be the state of things if the minister, instead of being a preacher on a platform, were a priest at the altar, a medium between the living Christ and the people; his first and highest work being this,—to have his own soul flooded with all of a Saviour's tenderness, mercy, and goodness, that thence it might flow down upon his people and diffuse itself through all their hearts and homes like the oil of gladness, insphering every old man and every little child, guiding their prayers upward to the seat of mercy, and bringing down upon them the Divine grace, sweet and constant as the suffusions of the early rain! Then devotion would always come before preaching, and the afternoon service at least of every Sabbath would be something more than coming together to hear another sermon that shall crowd the morning's lesson out of the memory. You would come because Christ was there, and the fellowship of the saints was there, and because, like the old soldier in the cathedral, you wanted to get away from the harsh clangor of the world's affairs, and lie broken-hearted before Him who hung bleeding upon Calvary.

I heard the other day of a small society which had struggled for some time to support preaching, till finally they gave over and shut up their church in despair. And there the church stands silent and deserted, and the Sabbath never more wakes a footfall within its aisles. What a "sign of the times" is this! what an omen of disastrous

change and the coming shadows of death! and what a comment, if not on our faith, at least on our methods of administration! The churches of Christ shut up and deserted, because no person who has passed through a divinity school can be paid for preaching a sermon! The communion of saints, the presence and fellowship of Christ, the coming of the Holy Ghost in summer gales, where prayer has opened the door for it among two or three that have met together,—all this goes for nothing unless somebody can be hired to preach a sermon. Why, in the first days of the Church the doctrines of the Gospel were lodged so securely in the heart that they preached sermons of themselves, and kept the heart-strings in vibration every hour. The spiritual world was an open reality, and lay on their souls like a bright and haunting presence; the glorified Christ was ever near with his "Peace be unto you"; they prayed without ceasing, and therefore the breezes of God's spirit were always rippling on the surface of the soul. Therefore they came together, because they could not help it; for the social gathering was the sphere of the Divine Love, where every beating of the heart was a prayer, and the spontaneous utterance of the lips was a hallelujah. So it would always be if worship and devotion were living and primary, and the Church, instead of being a place for the spectators of one man's performances, were a place where every soul had such part in a living ritual as should bring it under the strokes of God's subduing love. And what hinders? Why not turn at least half the Sabbath to its ancient purpose? Why not have half the day for prayer and conference, for communion on the highest themes, for the study of God's Word by the congregation itself, and not for another sermon to crowd the last one out of the memory? And why in this way should there not be a knowledge of Christ that should be ever growing, and a revival in the Church which should never know decline?

I shall not leave any room for being misunderstood. I

would be the last one to disparage preaching. Yea, rather I magnify its office. I put in a plea to diminish the quantity in order to improve the quality. I ask that the minister, instead of being made a talker for the exhibition of personal qualities, shall be made a priest for the coming of Christ into the midst of the congregation. And this brings me to my second topic,—the substitution of theories about Christ for the living Christ himself. And this seems to me to connect itself very closely with the mistake of putting preaching before worship; for if preaching be made primary, it will lose the breath of devotion, and sink into mere intellection, and run off into theories about Christ, or about anything that can furnish the entertainment of the hour. I do not know that I shall bring out with sufficient fulness the distinction between preaching Christ and preaching about Christ, but I think it to be broad and plain.

There are two modes of thinking about the Saviour. One represents him as an historical person who lived a great while ago, introduced a new code of morals, told about God as a Father, set a good example, worked miracles, and went away; since which we only study his words, imitate him as we can, and celebrate his death on communion Sundays. The other regards him as the "God with us," the ever-present Mediator through whom God yields himself to our hearts and fills out all our rituals;—a present Saviour and Helper, who has taken up all human experience into his own.

Speculate as we may about Christ, let us leave him to the Church as that Divine Humanity through which God is always coming, and through which the heavens are always passing into our souls. If we have only the historical Christ away back at the morning of Christianity, who simply projected his Church into time, and then went away and left it, alas for us as we drift away from that bright past into the deepening night of the ages! But if we have the Christ who went away that he might come nearer again,

who ascended that he might descend and "fill all things," then the humblest disciple can always look up to a present Redeemer, who bears all his sufferings, forgives all his sins, cleanses away all his impurities, enriches and makes whole his broken and wasted nature, sheds the Comforter through his heart, to whom it turns like flowers that always drink the dew, — who is present at the most squalid death-bed of the truly penitent sinner, and spans it with his bow of peace.

I do not believe that any analysis in the power of man can ever reduce to scientific propositions the mystic union between Christ and the Father. Neither Trinitarian nor Unitarian, neither Arian, Sabellian, nor Socinian, can ever give you such a psychology of the Divine nature as to bring it all within the grasp of the finite understanding. But one thing I hold to be plain, — that man's first, last, and deepest need is to have the awful gulf bridged over between himself and God, so that God and man may be in conjunction and harmony again; so that God may pass over into humanity as its daily life, forgiveness, comfort, inspiration, and joy. And this cannot be except through the one Mediator, the man both human and divine, the God in Christ ever reconciling the world unto himself.

Herein lies the distinction between preaching Christ and preaching a religion concerning Christ. It is precisely the difference between the Christ of history and the Christ of experience and consciousness, — between a list of facts and propositions presented for my belief, and a living hand stretched out for me to grasp, and a living breast on which I can lean and weep my guilt away; the difference between God as the abstraction of the Stoics, and God so humanized that he takes up all my sufferings and wants into his divine experience, and thence sends back into my nature all the throbbings of his tenderness. Hence the reason why the word God may be uttered without emotion, while the word Jesus opens the heart, and touches the place of tears. God out of Christ is a first principle, and gives no image to the

thought. God in Christ is humanized, and brought home to all my wants and necessities.

One truth stands out very plain on almost every page of the early Christian records,—the personal presence of the Saviour as a power in his Church, melting into all hearts, and making its ordinances alive; in fulfilment of his own promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

I do not disparage at all the historical Christ, or undervalue his work as a teacher. But is that enough? As well might a starving man say it was enough to be told that food was abundant across some chasm he has no means of crossing. What I need is, not to be told about the Father, but that the Father may impart of his nature to mine, and lift it up and glorify it; and unless he does this, no matter to me what his nature may be. What God is out of Christ and as an abstraction, I do not know. That word Father, taken from natural relations, themselves tainted with selfishness and sin, will not of itself reveal him; for the heathen before had applied it to the deity whom he made altogether such a being as himself. What God is in Christ, I know full well, for Christ is the image of all his attributes, and the refulgent expression of all his wisdom and love. “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” How are all the false notions of God corrected, when we see his attributes imaged forth in the Son, and thence beaming down upon us! Looking through nature, we may mistake him; but there is no mistake here. In studying the creeds, we may mistake him; but there is no mistake here. All the hideous doctrines that obscured his attributes,—infant damnation, unconditional decrees, material hell-fire,—vanish the moment you see Christ, not as a man, nor as some third part of God, but as the full expression of God himself; for before that truth those false doctrines disappear like ugly spectres that troop before the dawn. What God is in Christ, we know full well, and hither we can come and

hang all our hopes, and lavish all our loves. It has seemed to me that the old sentiment of the love of God, a love truly active and taking up the whole strength of our being and bearing us clean away, was quite in danger of being lost, because the great doctrine of Mediatorship was being lost too. An abstract principle you cannot love. A God divided you cannot love supremely, for the heart is distracted and cloven. A God revealed in one Divine Person, and humanized by living sympathies, you *can* love, and there you can come and cling as your final refuge and your central rest.

But Christ has set an example for us! O yes, — lived a perfect life in the flesh, and shown us how we ought to behave! I will not decide for others, but, speaking out of my own experience, I do not need these fine examples. I have altogether too many of them for my comfort and peace. They rather discourage and taunt me, than help me along. I know too well what I ought to be now; I do not need anybody to tell me that, and mock me by passing before my sight the model of a faultless life. I strive after it and sigh after it in vain. Christ, the perfect human pattern, is away up in the sky, and that full-orbed perfection was reached by steps that I cannot climb; and though

“Wings at my shoulder seem to play,
Yet rooted here I stand and gaze
On those bright steps that heavenward raise
Their practicable way.”

No! I do not need a Saviour that shall come and set an example for me to follow, but to come within me and lay a quickening hand upon my nature, and put soul into my weak and palsied virtue, and clothe me from within outward in the robes of his own innocence and righteousness.

“Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.”

In this we have, not some theory of the atonement, but the atoning power itself always operating upon the hearts and

lives of men. It is simply both sides of Paul's grand composite doctrine, one God and one Mediator. With only the first, our theology is meagre and barren. The Jews had that, but it was powerless in making the heart soft and pliant, and their bigotry was infrangible as the flint beneath it. By the first, we preserve the doctrine that God is one. By the second, the one God turns his countenance upon us full of tenderness and grace. By the first, we preserve the Divine unity, and so far the intellect is satisfied. By the second, we apprehend the Divine humanity, and the heart is satisfied too. By the first, God dwells away in the eternal silences, and I cannot find him. By the second, he comes forth and meets the returning prodigal, and falls on his neck with the kiss of reconciling love. The first gives us one God, but he is unknown, and afar off. The second gives us one God again, and he is brought, O how marvellously near! By the first, I am told there is a sun beyond our firmament whose rays have never yet reached me, and I gaze through the empty spaces in vain. By the second, I take the glass, and the unknown luminary "swims into my ken," and I almost veil my senses before the grand and beautiful sight. With only the first, the Church must always look back, — back, with no hope of an ever-brightening future. With the second, she carries the living Christ into all her history, making all her ritual to glow with a sense of the Real Presence, and supplying the disciple with the Comforter every hour. With the first, the preacher may speculate on the Divine nature, and the unknown God, and the Christ of history, and preach himself and his ingenious philosophies, the Church meanwhile going to languishment and decay. With the second, the ever-present Mediator, its depleted and gasping theologies are raised up and filled with lifeblood, and because the Messiah is always coming, theology is always new.

Such is the Christ of the present hour, — Immanuel, God with us, — instead of one who died and has passed away. And

once believed in, how mighty would this truth be, and how would all other truths centre around it! What a meaning there would be in the Eucharist, if you knew and felt that Christ were present, and how much more sweet and tender would be its communings! How little should we preach ourselves, and how rather should we lose ourselves in him! How would all other topics take their tone and coloring from this, and be redolent of the spirit of Jesus! How would all reforms be pervaded by the spirit of the one great Reformer! How would the broken members of his Church gather again around the living centre, and speculations about the atonement be forgotten in the one atoning power that makes the believers at one with each other and with itself! And how would the growth of the churches depend, not mainly on the personal gifts of the preachers, but on Him who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and keeps their lights burning with everlasting brilliancy!

Christian friends and brethren, may yours be such a church and such a ministry. May the living Christ be in each, and out of him may you have springs of prosperity and peace which shall never fail. The Church is dead, morality is dead, religion and worship are dead, truth itself is dead, being a dry abstraction, except so far as Christ comes within them, and by his personal presence makes them glow with the Comforter and live. So may he come and abide with you!

And you, my brother! May he come to you and make your work delightful. That done, it is its own exceeding great reward. More than all the glittering prizes of wealth and ambition are the satisfactions that await you, if only the living Christ be the soul of your endeavors; for that will make all your burdens light, and turn your work into song! I may not encroach upon another exercise of this occasion; but having known through what struggles, trials, and disappointments you have persevered unto the end, and finally brought your powers as a whole offering to this work, I may utter this word of hope and gratulation. May the as-

pirations of years, often baffled, be realized now! And may the blessing be yours, my brother, which always waits on singleness of purpose in the highest work which God has committed to man!

ODE.

THE ASCENSION.

FROM FRAY LUIS DE LEON.*

"We have great pleasure in giving insertion in the pages of the 'Revista' to this celebrated Ode of Fray Luis de Leon, now complete, and enriched by four stanzas more than are to be found in any of the Spanish collections, from that of Quevedo of 1631, down to that of our contemporary, Aribau.

"We are indebted, for this valuable literary novelty, to the noble disinterestedness and love of letters of our friend and co-laborer, the accomplished jurist and distinguished Sevillian poet, D. Juan José Bueno, who has preserved this composition (as well as many others by Leon, hitherto unpublished, but which we intend hereafter to give) in a manuscript collection of works of the sixteenth century; all of which have been acquired by him by unwearied toil, and costly sacrifices in getting together and examining all the works pertaining to this golden age of our classic literature." — *Extract from the "Revista de Ciencias, Literatura y Artes," of February 1, 1858, published in Seville.*

ACTS I. 9. — "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

AND dost thou, Holy Shepherd, leave
Thy flock in this deep vale obscure,
In silent solitude to grieve,
Whilst thou to thine abode secure
Cleavest the air serene and pure?

* ODA.

A LA ASCENSION.

DE FRAY LUIS DE LEON.

LOS HECHOS DE LOS APOSTÓLOS, Cap. I. v. 9. — "Y cuando esto hubo dicho, viéndolo ellos, se fué elevado; y le recibió una nube, que le ocultó á sus ojos."

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ¡Y dejas Pastor santo, | Y tú rompiendo el puro |
| Tu grey en este valle hondo, oscuro, | Aire, te vas al inmortal seguro? |
| Con soledad y llanto. | |

These, now so sad, dejected here,
 But once so richly, deeply blessed,
 Where shall they turn 'mid doubt and fear? —
 They, of thy presence dispossessed,
 Who to thy bosom once were pressed?

What can these eyes, that in thy face
 A rich and peerless beauty found,
 In all else now but sorrow trace? —
 Of thy sweet voice, who heard the sound,
 And finds aught else, but sadness round?

Who shall this troubled sea restrain?
 Who o'er its billows calmly ride?
 Who to the winds give peace again?
 What star our bark to port shall guide,
 If thou from us thy face dost hide?

And thou, O cloud, that this brief joy
 Dost bear from us so quickly, say,
 Why dost thou thus our hopes destroy? —
 How rich, thou goest on thy way!
 How poor, how blind, alas! we stay!

With thee the treasure disappears,
 The richest boon to us below;
 Which banisheth all earthly tears,

Los ántes bien hadados,
 Y los agora tristes y afligidos,
 A tus pechos criados,
 De tí desposeídos,
 ¿A do convertirán ya sus sentidos?

¿Qué mirarán los ojos
 Que vieron de tu rostro la hermosura,
 Que no les sea enojos?
 Quien oyó tu dulzura,
 ¿Qué no tendrá por sordo y desventura?

¿A aqueste mar turbado
 Quien le pondrá ya freno? ¿quien con-
 cierto

Al viento fiero airado?
 ¿Estando tú encubierto
 Qué norte guiará la nave al puerto?

Ay! nube envidiosa
 Aun de este breve gozo, qué te aquejas?
 ¿Do vuelas presurosa?
 ¿Cuan rica tú te alejas!
 ¿Cuan pobres, y cuan ciegos, ay, nos
 dejas!

Tú llevas el tesoro,
 Que solo á nuestra vida enriquecía,
 Que desterrará el lloro,

And doth o'er life more lustre throw
Than purest day could e'er bestow.

What diamond band, or jewelled stone,
Can bind the spirit, or restrain
From following thee, thou Loving One?
O break, my soul, from that sad chain,
And bathe thy wings in light again!

What! dost thou the departure fear? —
Can loss of earth more than of Him
Create a pang, or start a tear? —
Of his fond gaze beneath the beam
To dwell, can this a *sorrow* seem?

O Thou, most precious Lord and Friend!
Father and Brother, Heavenly Spouse!
On thee my eager steps attend;
For, reft of thee, this vale of woes
Is reft of joy, of hope, repose.

C. F. B.

Que nos resplandecia
Mil veces mas que el puro y claro dia.

Qué lazo de diamante
¡Ay! alma, te detiene y encadena
A no seguir tu amante?
¡Ay! rompe y sal de pena:
Colócate yá libre en luz serena.

¡Qué! ¿temes la salida?
¿Podrá el terreno amor más que la au-
sencia

De tu querer y vida?
¿Será acaso violencia
Vivir siempre de Cristo en la presencia?

Dulce Señor y Amigo,
Dulce Padre y Hermano, dulce Esposo,
En pos de tí yo sigo;
Que en este lagrimoso
Destierro, no hay, sin tí, bien ni re-
poso.

A MEMORIAL OF HELEN RUTHVEN WATERSTON.

DIED at Naples in Italy, July 25th, aged seventeen years, Helen Ruthven, the daughter of the Rev. Robert C. Waterston of Boston.

She died far away from her native country, and far from the sight of nearly all of her many friends. They had been looking for her eagerly and hopefully, and expecting her arrival the very month of her death. But they were not to see her. On her leaving America, she was a child of a sweet temper, affectionate, and obedient. But during her absence she bloomed into a womanhood of much beauty and many graces, and into a character of great worth and high promise. Alas for her parents, whose only surviving child she was! and alas for those many friends, who had longed to behold her in the loveliness of that beauty of which they had seen only the buds, and for whom she died a lily in a distant land!

Helen was born in Boston, on the 6th of January, 1841. And she was reared under the best influences of a New England home. In April, 1856, she was taken by her parents to Europe. The whole of the following winter and spring was passed by her in Paris, where she cheerfully submitted herself to the discipline of a school, which, for its strictness, might almost have been called conventual, only that it was Protestant. She attended the class for religious instruction held at the Church of the Oratory by the Rev. Athanasius Coquerel, and profited so much, as to have attained, though a foreigner, the most honorable position among her associates. Last winter she was in Rome, where she occupied herself with those pleasures which resemble studies, and with those studies which are so like pleasures, visiting works of art, and learning the great lessons of antiquity, which there are illustrated by the Pantheon and the Coliseum, by the Arches of Titus and Constantine, and by

those ruins which bear the names of Nero, Caracalla, and Hadrian. She enjoyed and improved herself much during her stay in the Eternal City. And there she proved that there was in her character an excellence which is very rare; for she showed herself to be altogether unspoiled by the many attentions and the great admiration which were offered her there. So did last winter pass with her, a season of improvement and great happiness. In the middle of April, she accompanied her parents to Naples. And she reached that city apparently in perfect health. She enjoyed, in her quiet, earnest way, the wonderful neighborhood around her, so beautiful in itself, so rich in the remains of the past, and of such singular interest, as being liable on any day to be blighted from Vesuvius. Just a week she had been at Naples, when suddenly her health failed. For three or four days she coughed incessantly. Soon she was confined to her chamber, and very soon by her physician her disease was pronounced to be mortal.

O the anguish of her parents, and the grief of many hearts on her account, both in Europe and America! But herself she was not troubled. During the whole time while her last days were passing, and while the weary nights of sickness were wearing away, she was calm, patient, and resigned, full of faith and immortal hope. Simple and unaffected in her manners, of a sweet temper and disinterested conduct, pure in heart, well educated as to her mind, and altogether uninjured by the admiration of which she had become the object, evidently she was possessed of a character of great goodness. But it was only as her life was ending, that she was known, even to her nearest friends, in all her worth. In the great dark trial, which had wrapped them all round, she was tenderly and unceasingly thoughtful for her parents; and she sustained the spirits of her father and mother, being herself sustained from within.

The last Sunday before her health had begun to decline, being then at Naples, she joined with some friends, who

celebrated together the Lord's Supper. This was her first communion. Three days after this began her last illness. The last illness of this young believer,—the words of St. Paul are an exact comment on it,—“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Helen suffered much pain during the first part of her illness: and for several weeks, it was expected that every day would be her last. She did, as it were, die daily. But never for a moment or one word was she otherwise than patient in her sufferings and entirely submissive to the will of God.

At last came a day, which was the one before her last. On this day she heard or seemed to hear sweet music, and she asked, “Do you not hear the music?” And who knows but she did hear it? Indeed, is it a thing unreasonable to suppose that possibly a spirit may have some perception of the next world, just at that very time when it is departing from this? And why should it be a thing incredible, that a soul should grow more sensitive as the flesh wears away, and should even hear the music of that world which always is round us, and which perhaps we all of us might sometimes know of, only that we live so much in our human clay, and so little in the pure and everlasting spirit?

Helen breathed her last at half past eight o'clock, on the morning of Sunday, July 25th. She looked upwards, and then, as though she saw into heaven, she exclaimed, “How beautiful! how beautiful!” and these were her last words, “How beautiful! how beautiful!” And so her spirit passed away, and onwards and upwards.

This frail nature of ours, so mortal,—woe, woe for it, only that it is immortal too. A death like that which is here recorded is a renewal of our faith. And with knowing of a soul over which death has no dominion, our own souls quicken within us, and are made to feel themselves, their unearthly affinities and their immortal instincts. Remarkably was Helen both the victim and the conqueror of death.

But yet—but yet, so young, so fair, so good, so much

beloved, so full of promise, and so suddenly summoned! All cheerful and happy as it was, still there was in this death a something peculiarly sad, for those who were bereaved by it. A life so fair in its beginning, so hopeful in its future, and closed so suddenly! Still, when we think of the storms which often sweep this world after the brightest, clearest morning, can we be otherwise than thankful, when, safe from every peril, a soul has gained its entrance into our Father's house? And some of us, when we remember what in our younger days we had hoped to be, and what yet we have failed to show ourselves, cannot but feel that even in the earliness of the great summons there may be a high privilege, as well as some mystery of the Divine goodness. And indeed we may well suppose that among the angels almost it may be a subject of congratulation and great joy, when the heavens are entered by a soul which has lived long enough in this world to learn its lessons, and which has then been withdrawn from it, having known of sin almost only by the shadow which it makes.

The body of Helen was deposited in the Protestant cemetery at Naples.

She was born while it was winter in New England, and she died in the midst of summer, in the land of the olive, the orange, and the vine. And now alive again, she sees the tree of life with its various fruits, and she walks in light among the nations of the saved, in that city which has no need of sun or moon.

And now let us trust that her surviving friends will be comforted in their bereavement, because they sorrow not as without hope. These lines have been inscribed on a stone in the cemetery. Let us join with the parents in their prayer:—

“Fold her, O Father, in thine arms,
And let her henceforth be
A messenger of love between
Our human hearts and Thee.”

W. M.

Bagni di Lucca, August, 1858.

KNOWLEDGE OF CHARACTER.

It is impossible to have a knowledge of the character of others, without, in the first place, having a knowledge of our own character.

This is a common enough saying, and most likely true for that reason; but, like many another common, true saying, its deepest truth is seldom appreciated, while, as a matter of fact, it is most generally employed by persons whose knowledge of human nature is both poor and partial.

It is proposed to inquire how best we can come at a knowledge of character, and the inquiry is, it is presumed, not less important to practical men, than to men of thought, so called; for the basis of all business transactions is the qualities which we ascribe to those with whom we deal. Knowledge of men has come to mean the power which a man has to detect deception, or practise it, rather than the power which a man has for any purpose;—the force of the man in the world, whether for good or evil.

Lowell has said:

“ Each man is some man’s servant; every soul
Is by some other’s presence quite discrowned.”

By showing the poet to be true in this saying, it will appear that knowledge of men is to be acquired, not as a convenience, but as a duty, and that the grasping, selfish kind of knowledge of men which goes under that name is not, in the long run, even a convenience; that to acquire such knowledge is not a duty, will hardly be questioned.

The tendency of the mind to idealize is much stronger than is commonly supposed. The reason seems to lie in the fact, that there is a genius in every man, making him to differ from all other men. An entirely new combination of qualities necessarily results from the marriage of suitably opposed characters. The child partakes of the character of his parents, but has also a bent of his own, which the cir-

cumstances of his life, different in the case of every human soul, will, by the discipline which comes from opposition, develop into a decided genius.

The objection will be made, that, practically, a decided genius is rare; so rare, indeed, that, in the popular phrase, nothing stamps a man as uncommon more effectually than to say of him, he is a genius.

An answer to this objection will serve to establish more firmly the truth of the thought against which the objection is brought. The answer is, that, practically, very few men are at the pains to develop their genius.

It is easy to determine some general features of a man's character from his occupation, and the chief changes of his career. The manner in which success and disappointment are met has always been a test of character. But by most men the changes through which the current of their life passes are not sufficiently taken under conscious control. Introspection, with a view to determining one's work in life, is too rare. An external standard, determined, not by what we are, but by what we think we are, gives the measure of our effort. Judging from this standard, the different departments of labor acquire a value in our eyes which they do not really possess; we lose sight of their historical character, forgetting that they each had once a beginning in the necessities of man, and were erected into their present relations by the unhallowed ambition of men; the stages by which the chief honor in each department is to be reached, become objects for the exercise of our faith and devotion.

Guided by this standard, the life of the man, when once he has chosen his profession, is that of more and more intense absorbment in his chosen department, its cant and its interests, and, instead of being his school, his profession becomes his master.

On the other hand, suppose a man to take conscious control of his own genius, and, while he is led by it in every choice, (as, indeed, he would be in any case,) still to

keep a restraint upon it by means of his understanding. He will always act from the highest motive, because he is doing what he can do, not what he thinks he can do. The monstrous false character which self had put upon him, and which he had formerly been laboriously wearing, will drop from his soul, and the man in his peculiar and proper manifestation will appear. He will find himself entering upon a congenial employment, if he is a young man, not as an occupation that he is "about as well fitted for as anything," nor, in the still more common expression of the same irreverent spirit, as a profession where "he thinks he can do the most good"; — which latter expression suggests, if not hypocrisy, at any rate wonderful discrimination on the part of the one who uses it; for there is an existing state of things, including the number and kinds of trades and occupations in the world, which we are all bound to defend as the only possible, and the best yet reached, in the light of which fact all discussion about the best field of labor is very idle.

No. The spirit in which he labors shall make his occupation the best for him, because he uses it as a help to the growth of his soul. When he has reached up to any of its grades of honor, he will have, not more honor, which, if received as honor, puffeth up, but more experience of the soul, which is an edification.

It is not difficult to come at one's genius, or spiritual life, if only we are simply willing and ready to enter upon the work. A period of doubt, perhaps, is entered upon at once, though this depends upon the mental constitution, during which the understanding seems to lose its office of correcting the vagaries of the religious sentiment, and time restores the harmony of the intellect and the affections, purified by the process, if Christ has been the purifier. But men are not commonly willing to be at such pains.

Every man, to return to the original proposition, idealizes life. I mean, that, whether he ever becomes conscious of it or not, every man's genius gives life its hue for him. Our

wishes, the world as we would have it, — that is what we ourselves are.

Children are continually showing their character by the expression of their wishes; and because men, as they grow older, cease to express so much, shall we, for that reason, cease to judge their characters by this simple test? If only you can possess yourself of a man's ideal of life, no amount of morality or immorality need alter the man's character to you; his course may be predicted. In fact, the morality of men is determined to a very great degree by their circumstances.

It is next to impossible, for example, that a descendant of one of the many adventurers who colonized Virginia, and who has always lived under the influences which a State thus colonized would inevitably throw around him, — that such a descendant should regard the gloomy observance of the Puritan Sabbath, which is still kept up in the country towns, as a duty, or as anything but an outgrowth of the atrabilious fanaticism that drove the Puritans hither.

Mackay has a poem called, I believe, "The Nine Bathers." Each bather would bathe in a differently tinted liquid, and, in like manner, each soul colors the medium in which it chooses to disport itself.

The biographer of Charlotte Brontë mentions the habit of "making out" in which Miss Brontë and her sisters used to indulge, and nothing is more common, if further proof is needed, than to speak of poetry which is Tennysonian or Holmes-y.

Mere respect for his breadth of character, it seems to me, would have secured Mr. Thackeray from all worthy criticism of his competency to be the satirist of the age; but since he has seen fit to defend himself publicly, by saying that he paints the world as he sees it, honestly, delicacy no longer enjoins silence, and the youngest admirer of his books can best tell him that the world needs no such painter to present her defects. If Mr. Thackeray finds Becky Sharps in Eng-

land, many of his readers find material for a better woman in *his* Becky Sharp; and if we believe him, as we cannot help doing, when he says that he writes down people as he finds them, we must put a still greater faith in him, and believe and trust that he will one day find himself.

Thackeray's power has never been seriously questioned. Many who have not an intellectual appreciation of his real strength, *his power of making things appear*, are nevertheless conscious that he makes things appear in a dark light, and this sort of criticism no protestations of sincerity can repel.

If now the tendency to idealize life is granted, and the incalculable advantages of the study of history adequately estimated as revealing the transmission of traits underneath that current of moral or immoral acts which commonly bears the name of history; if, furthermore, such an estimate shall make race to be the important element, and government, education, various manifestations of that element in time; and so, completing the analysis, if individualism shall be allowed a signification, — our knowledge of character becomes of transcendent importance. In the light of this theory, we shall see that the old Greek maxim, *Know thyself*, was the richest wisdom, which revelation made to be the deepest piety; that knowledge of character in others is merely correlative to knowledge of self; that a true view of life is possible only by a regenerative process, which shall break the husk of self-delusion, and reveal the germ of the genuine self.

I think this fact is easily established by observing the difference in the views taken by readers of books of the characters there portrayed.

As long as self-delusion lasts, all experience ministers to the growth of the false character with which self has endued us. Even if we do not read "what we most affect," self will permit us to draw only certain lessons from the books that we do read.

This will be found to hold true either of classes of books, or of particular books.

If we read poetry, we shall see rhythm, or pretty language, or noble sentiment, according to our intellectual character; but the meaning of verse, the logic of the heart, the comprehensiveness of the truths, and the certainty of the prophecies of true poetry, we shall scarcely be looking to find, unless our spiritual eyes have been opened.

Reading history, even after making allowance for the standpoint of the historian, we shall trace the progress, it may be, of religion, or traffic, or of agriculture, specially, and other departments of inquiry shall be subordinate to that special one; or, if the chronicle of events and the figures of the pageant be our study, we shall apply the scale of our individual experience to the narrative, and the ordinary men of history shall put on the countenances of our best and worst acquaintance, or else our common acquaintance shall become like dead heroes of history in our eyes.

Even the mathematics, which, as being based on exact and eternal laws, might be supposed to be superior to the laws of mind, will be found to have been variously formulated according to the genius of the races that have applied to them, and a common experience of men teaches us, that to some mathematics are merely discipline for the powers, while to others they are also food for thought.

But particular books reveal our moral character.

We read "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the character of St. Clare seems truly generous and not reckless, or reckless and not truly generous, according as impulse or principle is the *rule* of the reader's life. In other words, if the faults of a book-character are our own, we magnify them and refuse to see the virtues; if they are not our own, we allow the virtues to overshadow them. Accordingly, we dislike or like such and such a character.

But the spiritual eye discerns the true lesson of every book. It pierces the delusion which self would throw

around us, and allows us to perceive not only the true proportions of the invented characters, but also those of the character of the inventor. Not that the world becomes any fairer to him who has found his own spiritual character, and thus the key to all others. On the contrary, I think that to most people the world would become fouler. But if more vice is seen, so is more virtue discovered. It is simply a deeper life into which the soul retreats, — a life which in its destiny opens toward God evermore, and in its progress continually convicts what was substance of being really show, and whose law of development is that self-sacrificing law which obtains universally throughout nature, the law of love.

If further proof is wanted of the microcosmic theory of mind, and previous to showing that, if we must idealize life, it is better to spiritualize it than to materialize it, we may observe the teachings of Political Economy on the subject of value.

Political economy teaches of no absolute value, only an ideal, ever-shifting value. The labor, or in other words the thought with which a thing is clothed, constitutes the value of that thing.

If man chooses to desire something pleasing as well as useful, the desire will produce the supply, and the sacrifice required of labor or thought to produce the article will measure the value of the article. Man has had for these thousand years many vain imaginings and foolish ideas, and consequently the world is full of foolish and vain values, which, in turn, are each the highest ideal to many who will not recognize their adventitious origin, and sure depreciation.

And here seems a proper place to state and urge the main result of our inquiry, namely, the necessity, considering the speciality which the soul can make every event and person to assume, of a personal regeneration of self to self, as a spiritual standpoint from which to judge of character, and, on the other hand, the necessity for the regenerated soul,

impressed with a sense of the ever-shifting law of spiritual unity, tending to merge all specialities into ever completer and completer generalizations, to rest never satisfied with any degree of self-knowledge, but to preserve unshaken a faith, which will grow with exercise, in the possibilities of the human soul.

In urging the harmony of these two laws of the soul (just stated) as the result of this argument, it may save the statement from whatever in it is transcendental and unintelligible, to take the very common topic of fashion as an illustration.

The adventitious origin of all fashions is well known, but it is not so well appreciated that the nature of their origin constitutes the true claim they have to our respect. If every man was true to himself, there would be no fashion, for fashion is imitative. If you are a laborer, your true fashion of dress will be coarseness and durability of material, rather than exactness of fit or grace of cut, and it is simply nothing to you that with the tailor, competing closely for custom, refinements in the style become a real necessity rather than durability in a material of dress. You know the value of your fashion, and is not the skill required to adapt the dress more perfectly to the symmetry of the human form worth anything? Let the laborer be thankful, that, through the infinite division of labor, the human mind has had the leisure to work out an ideal even of a well-fitting coat,—a coat without superfluity, and yet easy for every natural movement of the body,—and let him who wears such a coat put it on with a profounder sense of the dignity of human labor, and punctiliously pay his tailor's bills.

But men are continually mistaking the sign for the reality. If they can successfully imitate the appearance, they think they have attained the spiritual excellence of which the former is but an emblem.

The truth would seem to be, that all fashions have an origin in personal wants, which, if always peculiar, are also

real. A man's circumstances must, therefore, determine his fashion, and any man who is true to himself may set a good fashion, because he will do always what is best *for him*, and there will always be some who, not willing to do what is best for them, will imitate.

In this way the soul stamps its special image on the world, and thus it practises the only true economy of living. Character, not individual merely, but character in the aggregate, is thus created, for the nobleness in men will rise to meet us, if we are noble.

But fashion is, proverbially, fleeting, and if, in view of the law of the soul, which allows it to specialize, to create, we ought to set our own fashion, or, in other words, give *our* character to the world, so likewise, regarding reverently the progressive law of all souls, which is ceaselessly flowing through all special creations, and recreating more general types from the old special ones, ought we to remember, that there is one fashion of unchanging excellence never attainable, always by its very progressive nature to be attained; an ideal perfection which is made up of the ideals of all the persons in the world; a fountain of character, whence all human character is derived; which gives knowledge of character in infinite ration on the simple condition of willingness to receive.

In conclusion, it may be said that, if the mind must create, and by its nature give its character to the world, so, too, must it be constantly recreated; that, if we are desirous of knowledge of character, we can obtain it, not by widening our experience of men, but by changing our own ideas of them.

One more word, in closing, seems to be called for. If any one has reached the point of desiring to deepen his nature, and, as it were, expose a larger reflecting surface of character, he is ready, it may be presumed, to take a method in order to win his desire.

It is the invincible argument for the truth of Christ, that

to the soul inquiring *at this point, willing for its own sake* to learn of better and surer things than any mere business, or the knowledge of men upon which business is based, can give,—anxious to find a business which shall be work,—the only possible, the very possible method of progress is the way of self-sacrifice,—a doctrine revealed by Jesus Christ alone.

E. T. F.

"THEN AND NOW."

Then I stood with eager longings
For the toil, and for the strife,
Foolish heart the meanwhile dreaming,
As it wove my web of life.
Had you whispered to the dreamer,
That, although the work was fair,
God, who is the Master Weaver,
Would put darker threads in there,—

Much I fear me, this the answer :
"No there are not those for me ;
Love and faith make all threads golden,
Though to others gray they be."
And the song that heart was singing
Was not trusting, sweet, and low,
But a war-cry stirring, ringing,
Like the knights of long ago.

O the words they told of conquest,
Told of laurels I should wear,
And how nobly I would labor,
How all great things I would dare !
Then the elders whispered, sadly,
Of the baptism God would will ;
But the heart said, "In deep waters
I must do my life-work still."

Now, I sit with tired hands folded
O'er a heart that is not sad :
Could you count its even beatings,
You 'd as little call it glad.
It may be that you remember
Noble things I was to do ;
Strong words that I was to utter,
That should live the ages through.

Now, by my one lamp's faint glimmer,
Humbly write I, " God knew best,"
Though each brave hope faded, shrivelled,
Like a dead leaf fell to rest.
Yet think not I shrank from labor ;
Heart did keep its first vow true,
But the Master's words were 'ever,
" Waiting is my work for you."

Oftentimes I murmured sadly,
I my lesson had not learned,
If I know it now ; Christ only
Sees how hardly it was earned.
Every year my life grew darker,
Each new day told of new loss,
Till at last athwart my rough way
Fell the sharpest, heaviest cross.

So that, crushed the wayward spirit,
There it found its greatest gain ;
Then, came love, and faith, and justice,
And we must not mind the pain.
By and by, I shall see clearly
Why my Master hedged the road ;
Till that day, will trust him simply
That he kindest wisdom showed.

Now my prayer is, that my lone life
May to some proud spirit tell,
That by waiting, as by working,
We may meet God's plan as well.

THE ATLANTIC CABLE.

A SERMON BY A. P. PUTNAM.*

LUKE II. 14 : — "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

As time goes on, man multiplies more and more rapidly his wonderful achievements. In all that illustrates his capabilities, his dignity, his greatness, no age in the past has been so remarkable as the present. The progress of his history has shown a continual progress in his development. Works which at one period were regarded as impossible to his power of accomplishment, he has at the next period completed, until now one is encouraged to believe that our race is yet to perform feats and miracles more stupendous than ever have seriously engaged the hopes or efforts of the world. What may we not indeed expect in the future, when we consider what has been done in the centuries that are gone? Survey the record of human triumphs, and see what a mighty power — power of mind, will, faith, courage, and execution — God wraps up in the human form. Behold man as the successful hero of many a well-fought battle-field, subduing whole nations beneath the sway of his own individual authority, and with a strong hand ruling their millions through laws which he himself has made and chosen! What complicated institutions and magnificent empires he has built! What vast and splendid temples he has erected, and decorated with every brilliant ornament which earth or sea could furnish, and with every grace and beauty of art! How glorious an object is the noble ship which he has constructed, and with which he sails the seas! Think how he pierces with it the regions of perpetual cold and ice, out-rides the gale, and visits every land. What a monument of his genius and toil are those languages which countless myriads have used as the means of communicating to each

* Delivered in the Mount Pleasant Church, Roxbury, September 5, 1858.

other their thoughts, sentiments, wishes, plans, and discoveries, and also as the sure repository of the great intellectual treasures of the world! Look at the printing-press he has invented, that wonderful intensifier of modern civilization and universal disseminator of intelligence, by which knowledge and ideas are made accessible, in abundant form and variety, to the masses of society. Call to mind that prodigy of his ingenious power, whose brief history has already changed the aspect of human affairs, — the steam-engine! What marvels it hath wrought in the whole industrial and commercial world! See how man has tunnelled the loftiest mountains, and through them made the highways of travel and traffic! He has changed the courses of the rivers, and spanned with bridges the wildest cataracts! How he has deciphered the mysterious hieroglyphics which God himself, in the long ages which have elapsed, has inscribed on every rock and stratum of the earth, and has read there a scripture older than Mosaic records, and eloquent, like them, of the might and majesty of the Creator! With what a subtle, searching analysis he has decomposed every substance and element of the physical universe, penetrated by chemical and microscopic power into the most hidden recesses of nature, and given names to every ultimate ingredient and every minutest form of matter! And then, as he has turned his gaze upwards, and with telescopic vision ranged the boundless fields of the firmament, lo! unnumbered stars, before unseen, marshal themselves in view, and tell him of worlds and realms which no unassisted eye hath ever seen. Of the vast planets and systems suspended by Almighty Power above us, how accurately he has measured the distances, described the orbits and appearances, and calculated the eclipses and aberrations! And how he hath made all that arithmetic of the skies guide him in his wanderings over the trackless main, and facilitate that widening intercourse that has been opened between the different nations and races of mankind! What a beautiful as well as aston-

ishing art is that by which he entraps the rays of sunshine, and by their aid transfers with unerring exactness, and with permanent impression, to glass or metal, the sacred lineaments of friendship! And how incredible that he has harmlessly brought down from the heavens the dreaded bolt, and sent the swift lightning to do his errands, until now — crowning achievement of the centuries — he has laid in the vast depths of ocean, from continent to continent, this Atlantic Cable, by which England and America, the Old World and the New, are united, I had almost said, into one, and friends on those opposite shores can converse, as it were, face to face.

Nor is this last a victory that stands by itself, simple and solitary. It is rather a grand summing up into one of a great series of noble inventions, discoveries, and achievements, which had gone before. Could we only know all that had to be done during the long, patient years and centuries which have passed away, the skill, labor, and study which had to be expended, the preparations and experiments which had to be made in almost every department of industry and science, the defeats and the difficulties which had to be met and overcome, before this cable could be laid, we should be more than ever amazed at the mind and power of man. It is not they *alone* who embarked on board the *Agamemnon* and the *Niagara*, nor those who were intimately associated with them in the enterprise, who are entitled to the honor of this success, however large may be their share of it. Thousands of the living and the dead, besides, have contributed to the triumph. To this sublime consummation how Philosophy has reasoned, Navigation explored, Science investigated, and Labor felled, mined, and forged! Not directors, engineers, electricians, and coilers of to-day only, but also seamen, mechanics, students, capitalists, and statesmen of other times, and of other circumstances, deserve remembrance. Verily they rest from their labors, but their works do follow them, — all of their attainments and victories

converging to this final fulfilment. In the manufacture of that mighty cable, in the construction of the steamers that conveyed it to mid-ocean, in the machinery employed to commit it securely to the deep, and to flash intelligent messages through its lengthened wires, what a combination may be seen of many of the most remarkable contrivances and conquests that other generations as well as our own were able to realize! How eloquent this whole triumph is of secrets that in the past have been wrested from nature, physical forces which have been harnessed into the service of man, and striking and innumerable applications of laws and principles to practical use! How marvellous that all these essential conditions should be thus fulfilled, all these operations and agencies be brought to such high perfection, and that then they should all be gathered up into one extraordinary result, — the wonder and the admiration of the world!

I do not know how such facts and considerations as these which I have mentioned may affect others; but to my own mind they reveal in the most powerful manner the splendid endowments and the transcendent dignity which belong to our humanity, and also point forward to a lofty destiny to which our race shall yet attain on earth. A being that is capable of such conceptions and achievements must indeed be possessed of an exalted and glorious nature. You may say, and say truly, that sin has marred, defiled, and enfeebled it. Yet is it the noblest work of God's creative power, and the dearest object of his constant love. And when we reflect upon what man *has* done, and from that survey think what he may yet accomplish; what dormant energies are still concealed within him, and wait to be unfolded; how intent all his faculties and powers are on solving every gigantic problem of the age; how through his activity and his success in every department of human endeavor he is constantly startling the world with fresh wonders, and lifting it up to higher elevations on the great scale of progress, — we

cannot fail to discover that as yet we have but feebly understood our own true worth, our real kinship to God, our immortal birthright. And it is in the light of this important truth, that we come to see also how necessary it is to the proper development and perfection of man and society, that every child of God should freely possess those rights and privileges which are his by nature, and without which true progress is impossible. A fair chance in this world is all that humanity asks. For his offspring God seems in every such event to demand this of all who would bind with fetters the mind, body, or soul of man. Every creed that represses free thought; every religion that is hostile to scientific inquiry; every custom that is at war with the just rights of personal judgment, opinion, and action; every institution that shuts from the mind the divine light of truth, — dooms man to the toil and the life of the brute, and by its cruel and relentless tyranny almost extinguishes the sacred spark heaven has kindled in every living soul, — is a foe to the advancement of mankind, and to the evident designs of the Almighty. So gifted a creature is man, and to such a bright, immortal career has his Maker plainly destined him, that it is undeniably one of the most fearful crimes to restrict the freedom or withhold the good that justly belongs to him. The powers and faculties of every human being were given him for the most exalted employment and the most thorough cultivation. It should be each one's aim to bring his own to the highest possible state of perfection, and to insure, so far as he can, the same blessings for his kind. This is manifestly the will of God. It is both our duty and our privilege. To what unimagined exploits would humanity this day be equal, were it released from every bondage to which it hath been subjected by unrighteous power!

While, however, we thus reverence human nature — not for *all* that it is and does, but for *much* that it does and is — for what it is capable of being and doing, for what it certainly will become and achieve, we must ever bear in mind that

man is but an instrument in the hand of God, from whom he derives his life, skill, and strength, on whom he is constantly dependent, and to whom he is eternally responsible. Man has nothing of which he can boast. God is the ultimate origin of all things. God is the creator, man is the creature. It is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth to man understanding. Nothing that he seeks to perform can be successful without God's favoring providence. With God is the control of every mind, the sway of all the elements, and the direction of the whole current of things. Every great event and benefaction like this is therefore to be referred to him as the final author. Glory is to be given to God in the highest.

It is very interesting to consider how, by all the tendencies of the age, and the rulings of Providence, Heaven, for many decades of years, has been guiding man to this unequalled triumph. It has been through a long time that the way has been surely preparing for this crowning result. When God had permitted this fresh Western world to be discovered, he planted here a race capable of founding the highest order of civilization, and making the new continent the wide home of freedom, intelligence, law, and progress. While yet he was disciplining them by trial, multiplying their numbers, extending their dominion, and diffusing among them the blessings of knowledge and truth, he caused, one by one, those many disclosures, inventions, facts, hints, phenomena, and instrumentalities to appear, which now we behold forming a vast chain of providential arrangements, stretching through the centuries, of which, if one smallest link had failed, that cable had never been laid. Everything is here seen to be beautiful in its season. Every needed success was effected, and every required agency was at hand, when it was desired. Whenever one step was taken, God opened the way for another. It was necessary that the ocean should be more quickly traversed ere such an event could come to pass, and he put it into the mind of

man to conceive of the steam-engine and bring it to the most perfect action. How complete the machinery, and exquisite the art, by which those faultless wires must be made, twisted, and prepared for use! At the appointed time these results had all been attained. Was some suitable non-conducting material wanted in which those wires might be encased and find protection? Just then it had been discovered, and its adaptation to such a use sufficiently tested. Was it uncertain whether a cable could be stretched across the summits of the Atlantic's submerged mountains, and bear the chafing and the strain which it was supposed oceanic currents would cause it? While yet the question was in debate, God commissioned to sound those unknown depths one whose theory of a vast table-land plateau, stretching beneath the sea from Newfoundland to Ireland, along which the cable could lie, undisturbed by the storms and the tides above, imparted confidence to minds that had been troubled with doubt, and inspired with practical, efficient courage those who had before shrunk from the work as an impossibility. And when all things else were ready, were there needed men who were fitted by genius and discipline to take charge of the great undertaking, and conduct it to entire success? Forth they came, trained by Providence somewhere in the wide school of the world, each for his special service,—public men to secure the co-operation of the two leading political powers,—millionnaires to give, not only their money, but their counsel,—gallant and faithful commanders, and skilful pilots and surveyors, to insure a safe passage and arrival of the fleets,—artists and machinists to design, perfect, and superintend arrangements for paying out the cable and transmitting signals,—and chiefly the hero of the hour, the master-spirit of the enterprise, who, when several defeats had overtaken him, and his associates on whom he had relied for advice and aid had one after another begun to abandon him, and the world had become not a little incredulous as to the completion of the

work, abated not a jot of his faith or zeal, crossed the ocean more than twenty times in the accomplishment of his mission, kept oversight of the progress of operations on both sides of the Atlantic, and inspired the hearts of all his subordinates with his own earnestness and scrupulous care, until, to the surprise and joy of the civilized world, he gained the victory, — no damaging mistake or accident happening in all this complicated train of circumstances and labors. Who is so blind that he cannot see that He who kept within the necessary bounds the winds and the waves, also led on by his divine hand this beautiful and harmonious procession of things? Well did the pious captain of the Niagara say to his fellow-citizens, as they welcomed him to his home: "In this great work you are not indebted to us. We have been the simple instruments in the hand of an Almighty Power, and to Him be all the glory."

"On earth peace, good-will toward men." If it is clear that the glory of the achievement is to be rendered to God as its real author and superintendent, it is equally evident that to him all its use and influence should be for ever consecrated. This is its proper mission. It is the end and object to which it may be most easily, as well as appropriately, set apart. Every circumstance, and the general aspect of the enterprise, proclaim this established means of communication between the Old World and the New as one of God's most efficient instrumentalities for promoting harmony and friendship among the nations, and for the Christianization of the world. It is with nations as with sects and individuals. The more they really know each other, and the more their mutual interests are multiplied, the stronger become their reciprocal attachments, and the more difficult it is found to provoke them to strife. The Atlantic Cable, in no trivial degree, unites into one, England and America, and through them, the two hemispheres. The rapid converse they can now hold together respecting stocks, markets, crops, elections, government, war, public and private mat-

ters, will assuredly favor increased intercommunication and wider acquaintance. The ties of amity, sympathy, and interest will be formed between innumerable persons and communities which are now separate from, and unknown to, each other. And when those ties shall have woven their complicated network, running their threads out into thousands of villages and cities, and myriads of human hearts and homes, what friend of violence and alienation shall dare to rupture the all-embracing bond of union? So great will be found the advantages of this new mode of international intercourse, that they will not be suffered to be suspended or disturbed by many, at least, of those temptations, rivalries, prejudices, and disputes which have brought so many countries into dire collision. Who of us does not feel, as he never felt before, that between ourselves and the land of our ancestors there *must* be, *shall* be, no more war for ever? Cherishing the same ancient traditions, speaking the same language, vitalized by the same noble blood, children of the same wise laws and free institutions, strong in the same great Protestant faith, forming the two leading political powers of the world, it was peculiarly fitting that Americans and Englishmen should be connected by this additional bond, and that they should inaugurate this great work. By their example and influence let them now be equally conspicuous in so using this vast agency as to extend the benign principles of fraternity, peace, and love throughout the earth. Never let that cable be dishonored in serving man's selfish interests, in transmitting to the ends of the world the false or vicious thought of his heart, or in kindling the fires of animosity and war among the nations. Let it serve to adjust all unhappy misunderstandings. Let it be sacred to the messages of the loved and the absent. Let it thrill with the tidings of safe arrivals and strengthened health. Let it be glad with the announcements of fallen tyranny and risen freedom. Let it speed the news of ended hostilities, and inviolable, lasting compacts. Let it tell of

other empires opened to the spread of the Christian religion. Let it proclaim the prostration of every heathen altar and idol, and the doom of every false religion. Let it speak of remotest islands, now sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, illumined with the light of everlasting truth, and earth's habitations of cruelty made the dwelling-places of righteousness. Let it be eloquent of all that contemplates the elevation and salvation of men. And as others like it shall be deposited in the depths of the sea until over those submarine hills and plains they meet in countless intersections, and, fastening to every shore, bring the nations of the world into one vast, united family, let them all be devoted to the furtherance of God's great purposes of human progress and welfare.

We welcome this event as the harbinger of the better time. Away with the gloomy conceit that it constitutes a dark or doubtful omen of the future of mankind. Such a thought bespeaks mental disease and despairing faith. Into the coming ages this success opens, rather, most glorious visions. Amid all our discouragements and struggles, it assures us, in language that admits of no cavil, that the course of humanity is onward and upward.

Nor is this the only cheering sign of the times. However much there may be in our own land, and in other countries, to sadden the hearts and paralyze the energies of the philanthropist and the Christian, yet there is much more that is fitted to inspire with hope and activity. Science every year dispenses increasing treasures to the world. Never was there so much done as now for the poor, the maimed, the sick, the blind, the insane, and the ignorant. Conquerors from fields of blood no longer hold the first place in the hearts of the multitude. Other heroes and heroines of far different mould now win the laurelled honors of the public;—Florence Nightingale, who follows the desolating march of war to administer cordials and comfort to the wounded and dying;—Peabody, who devotes his justly earned riches to

the success of beneficent enterprises, to the cause of general education, and to the enduring friendship of England and America ;— Kane, who encounters the perils of Arctic voyages to open new realms to science, and to give profitable entertainment to a million readers ;— and Field, who, in surmounting so many obstacles to his triumph, and in uniting in this interesting relation our own and the mother country, has inscribed another name to the bright roll of the benefactors of mankind. This is the class of men and women who, in increasing numbers, are coming forward to displace the scourges of our race ; and it is a most significant and cheering indication, that their services to humanity fail not of their reward from the grateful heart of the people. See, too, how surely democratic ideas are infusing themselves into the minds of the masses throughout Christendom, and in their presence old, hoary institutions of wrong are dissolving in ruin. The disfranchised and outraged classes of society are in many a nation coming to share more fully their natural and inalienable rights. Even in Russia, millions of serfs are now rising by the aid of imperial power to the condition of freemen. European thought and enterprise are reanimating the more ancient civilizations of the Orient. Every recent war, God is overruling for good. Resubjugated India yields to the march of English ideas and the power of an aggressive Christianity. And now the first regular despatch through those cable wires, dedicating them for ever to “ peace on earth and good-will towards men,” assures us that the war between England, France, and China is ended, and, for the first time in all history, the blessings of the Gospel of the Son of God may be freely offered to the three hundred million inhabitants of the Celestial Empire. All these things should impart to us new faith and fresh courage. They teach us that the promises of God are true. In their light all the ancient Hebrew prophecies glow with unwonted radiance. Never did the dear old oracles of divine truth seem so full of meaning and beauty as now. They conspire with all the tenden-

cies and indications of the age in encouraging us to gird on our strength anew in the great work of life, and to consecrate to God all our time, our talents, our labors, our discoveries, our acquisitions, and our triumphs.

O brethren, there *is* a heroism which we may attain, there *is* a victory we may all secure, more glorious far than any which this event has brought to light. Amid all our celebrations and rejoicings, let us ever remember that. Not in the sea, but in the heart, lies the sphere of action. Forces more powerful than ocean currents or whirling tempests there await us. Foes more formidable than unfaithful friends or sneering sceptics. A skill and toil and care shall be there demanded of us which none of that cable crew ever matched. To subdue passion and pride, to root out envy and unkindness from the heart, to overcome our selfishness, and to catch the spirit of self-sacrifice, to kill within us every wicked prejudice, to learn to love all of God's children, to acquire a trusting, patient, and obedient temper, to become affectionate, faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, wise, pure, good, and holy, surrendering ourselves entirely to God, willing to be, to do, and to suffer whatsoever he may think best, — this is something in whose presence the achievements of physical power and mental genius fade for ever from sight. But by as much as such a heroism and victory are sublimer than anything else which can be compared with them, by so much are the means of realizing them increased to us. And whoever will accept the help which is proffered him in Jesus, the Son of God, will find that he can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth, and that he can gain a triumph whose trophies shall endure when every vestige of that proud cable shall have perished, and the sea shall have given up its dead.

EDITOR'S COLLECTANEA.

The Age; a Colloquial Satire. By PHILIP JAMES BAILEY. Ticknor and Fields. — Mr. Bailey has here turned his unusual powers, as an observer, a critic, and a poet, to a kind of writing which, partly by demand and partly by toleration, partly by merit and partly in spite of the want of it, has secured a place in the great republic of letters. For the interests of pure literature, or of classical culture, it would be quite as well if the naturalization papers had never been granted. But as there are moods and places where people of breeding and refinement throw off the restraints of conventional decorum, or even of real dignity, to see how well they can talk the banter and the slang which are commonly forbidden the range of good society, so authors are allowed to amuse themselves, and as many more as are willing to be amused, with liberties of a corresponding description. To read this strange medley through, would imply more leisure than we can command. Indeed, we wonder so earnest a man as the author did not tire of his task before the proof-sheets of the two hundred pages were corrected. But it is not necessary to read the whole to see that his penetration, originality, and boldness of speech did not forsake him when the mystic turned vulgarist, and the philosopher condescended to "Colloquial Satire."

Religious Aspects of the Age. Thatcher and Hutchinson. New York. — Here we have the age treated in quite a different style, not without poetry, by any means, but in a more serious spirit, by men of grave callings, speaking for a religious association, the "Young Men's Christian Union of New York." Without elaborate preparation, the addresses manifest the ability and eloquence to be expected of such orators as Doctors Osgood, Sawyer, Chapin, and Bellows, and Messrs. Frothingham, Blanchard, Miel, Barrett, Mayo, Higginson, Peters, Warren, and Greeley. In the ornithological mode of classification now current, most of these gentlemen, and their views, would be generally ranked as belonging to the "left wing," in questions of religion and society. Those whose sympathies cannot go along with all their opinions will find that they know how to give stirring utterance to many generous sentiments.

Letters on the Religious Revivals which prevailed about the Beginning of the Present Century. By E. PORTER, D.D. Congregational Board of Publication. — Professor Porter, of the Andover Theological Seminary, was engaged in 1832 to write a series of letters to "The Spirit of the Pilgrims," on the characteristics, methods, and results of the general revival that prevailed in this country half a century ago. By taste, experience, and the faithful habit of his mind, he was fitted to perform this service in a manner so acceptable, both

in a literary and religious view, as to give his work a permanent value. Besides a moderate, judicious, and yet earnest discussion of the right conduct of such seasons of peculiar spiritual interest, his treatise gives many pointed suggestions as to the faults and merits of preaching, the distinction between profound and transient impressions, and the dangers of insincerity. These parts of the work will prove edifying even to readers who differ theologically from the author.

Guide to the New Convert. By L. IVES HEADLY. Congregational Board of Publication. — Another title of the same practical volume is "Preparation to Profess Religion." Both indicate the exact design. After the awakening of the soul to a new life, there is commonly a peculiar sensitiveness to religious truth, a special eagerness to find tests of acceptance, and considerable danger of spiritual pride, or other morbid moods. This little book, consisting of a brief series of questions and Scriptural references, with a few original answers, is meant to meet this condition. The questions are pertinent and searching, though not without encouragement. Of course it will be understood that the theology is that of the Board of Publication.

Mrs. Leslie's Juvenile Series. *Play and Study*, and *The Motherless Children*. Shepard, Clark, and Brown. — The first of these is a story of the trials and pleasures, sins and successes of school life, interesting to girls of ten or fourteen. The other is quite a novel, with a fair allowance of ingenuity and good intention. The books are handsomely printed, but the illustrations strike us as rather stiff.

Goody Right Thirsty. By MAG PIE. Shepard, Clark, and Brown. — Grotesque picture-books for young children may be very funny. But the pictures need never be repulsive nor deformed. These are well done, and some of them are pleasing. On the other hand, we greatly respect a little fellow, who, notwithstanding a goodly love of fun, cannot be induced to look at some of them a second time.

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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